# MORTAL KOMBAT®

ISSUE No.2 OCTOBER 95p

**FREE**
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**WIN MK 3 FOR THE SEGA MEGADRIVE AND SUPER N.E.S.**

**THE ACTION NEVER STOPS - -**

**IN THE SECOND CHAPTER OF BLOOD AND THUNDER**

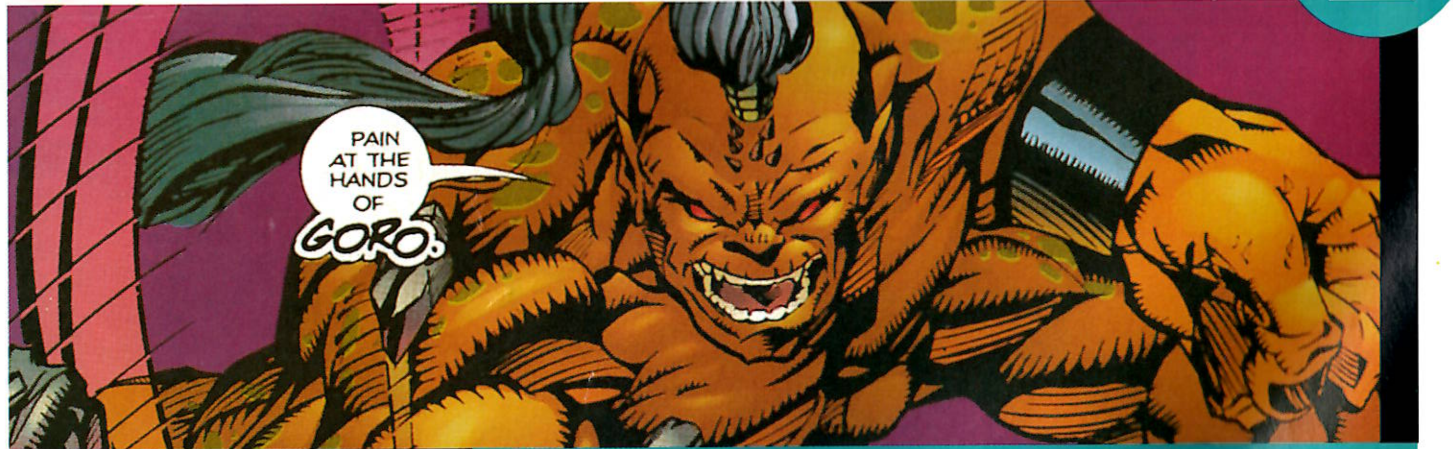
**IN THE LAIR OF SHANG TSUNG!!**

MORTAL KOMBAT®

Issue #2 October 1995

● Cover-*Patrick Rolo and Bobby Rae* ● Editor-*Dick Hansom* ● Design-*Suzuki Quatro* ● Advertising-*Rod Shaile* on 0181 748 9000

# Blood and Thunder Part 2


PAIN AT THE HANDS OF GORO.

## "Test Your Might"

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Inks **Steve Biasi, Bobby Rae & Larry Welch**
Lettering **Dave Lanphear**
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## WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

A mysterious barge sets sail from Hong Kong across the East China sea. On board are fifty of the greatest fighters the world has ever seen. Their destination is the Island of **Shang Tsung**, and the ultimate tournament — Mortal Kombat.

Among their number are **Johnny Cage**, the Hollywood superstar, **Liu Kang**, a disciple of the Order of Light, the ninjas **Hydro** and **Sub-Zero** from the Lin Kuei clan and the spirit of their nemesis **Scorpion**, who vows revenge for his untimely death at Sub-Zero's hands. An unexpected competitor is **Lt Sonya Blade** of the US Special Forces, who boards the ship in pursuit of the villainous **Kano** of the dreaded Black Dragon organization.

Shang Tsung longs to unlock the secrets of the mystic tome, the Tao Te Zhan, but it is protected by a spell woven by the Order of Light. He holds prisoner the Order of Light's champion, a warrior called **Siang**, who is formed from the spirit of two of the order's mightiest monks, Sing and Sang. But they have not revealed the secrets of the book.

Disembarking on the island, the treacherous Shang Tsung introduces the Kombatants to the reigning champion, the monstrous **Goro**, Prince of Pain, who has been undefeated for the past 500 years. And as they make their way across the beach, the skies darken to herald the arrival of another competitor — **Rayden**, the God of Thunder, who must walk the earth once more.

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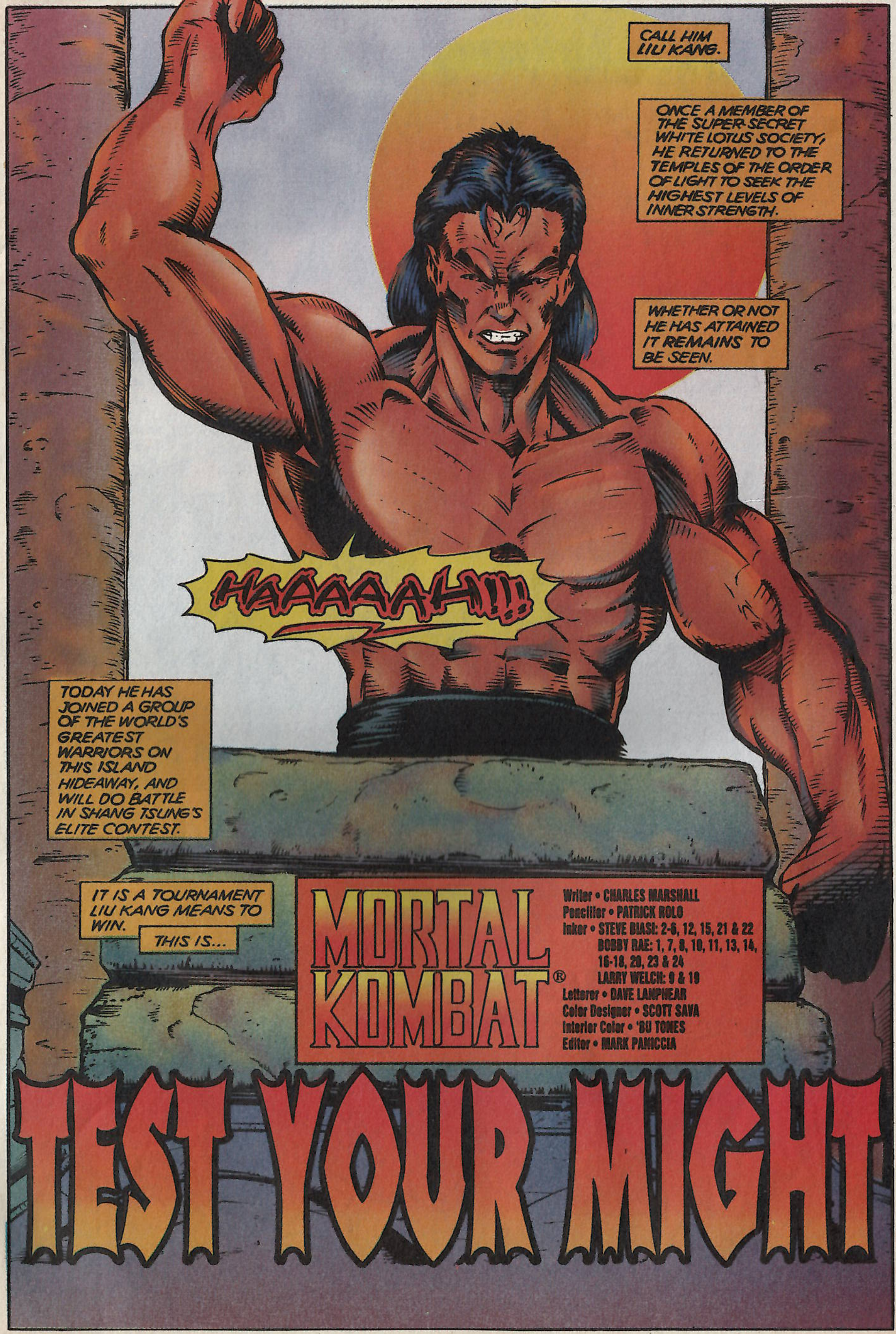
CALL HIM LIU KANG.
ONCE A MEMBER OF THE SUPER-SECRET WHITE LOTUS SOCIETY, HE RETURNED TO THE TEMPLES OF THE ORDER OF LIGHT TO SEEK THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF INNER STRENGTH.
WHETHER OR NOT HE HAS ATTAINED IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN.
HAAAAAH!!!
TODAY HE HAS JOINED A GROUP OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST WARRIORS ON THIS ISLAND HIDEAWAY, AND WILL DO BATTLE IN SHANG TSUNG'S ELITE CONTEST.
IT IS A TOURNAMENT LIU KANG MEANS TO WIN.
THIS IS...
MORTAL KOMBAT®
TEST YOUR MIGHT

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Inker • STEVE BIASI: 2-6, 12, 15, 21 & 22
BOBBY RAE: 1, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16-18, 20, 23 & 24
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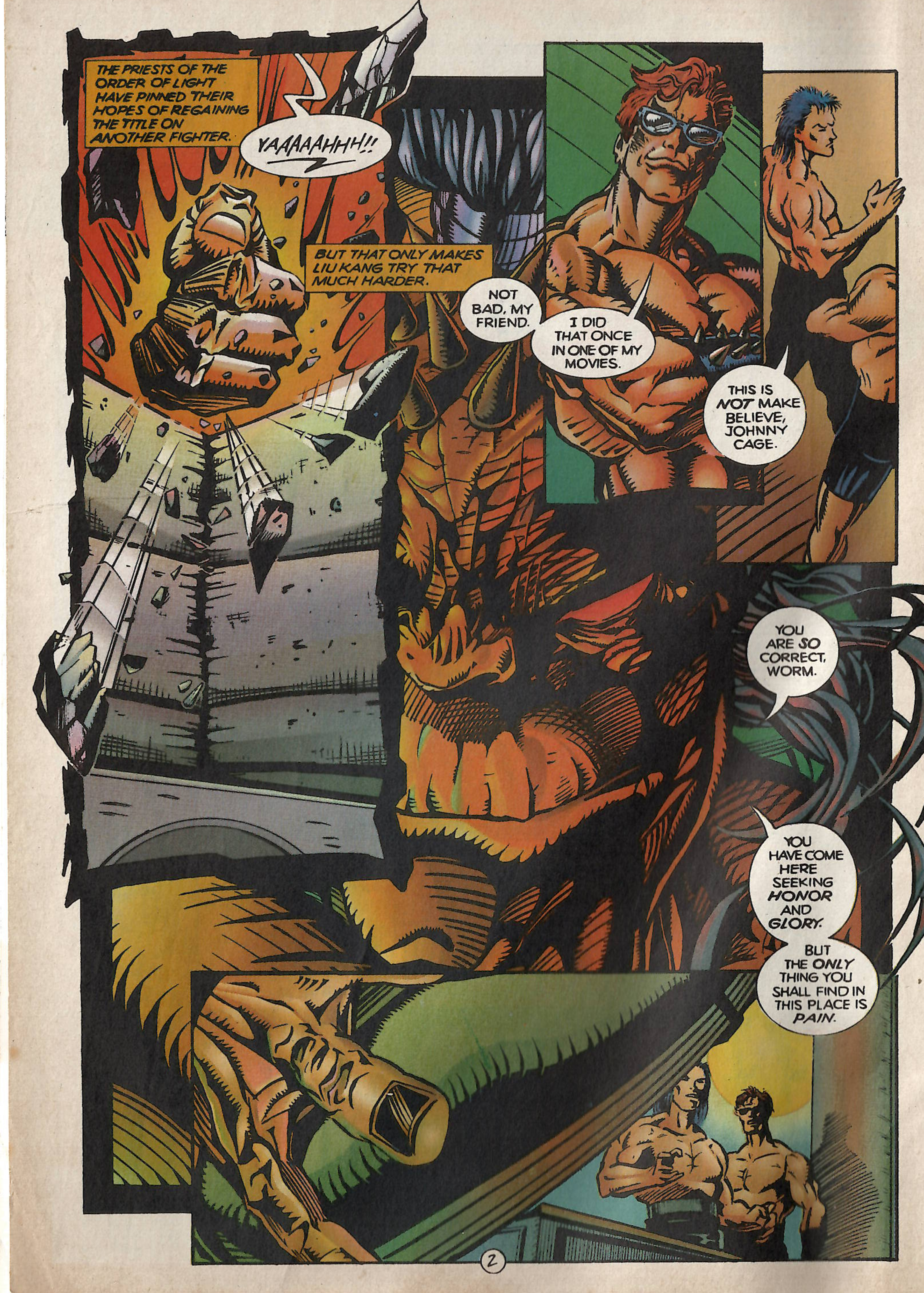
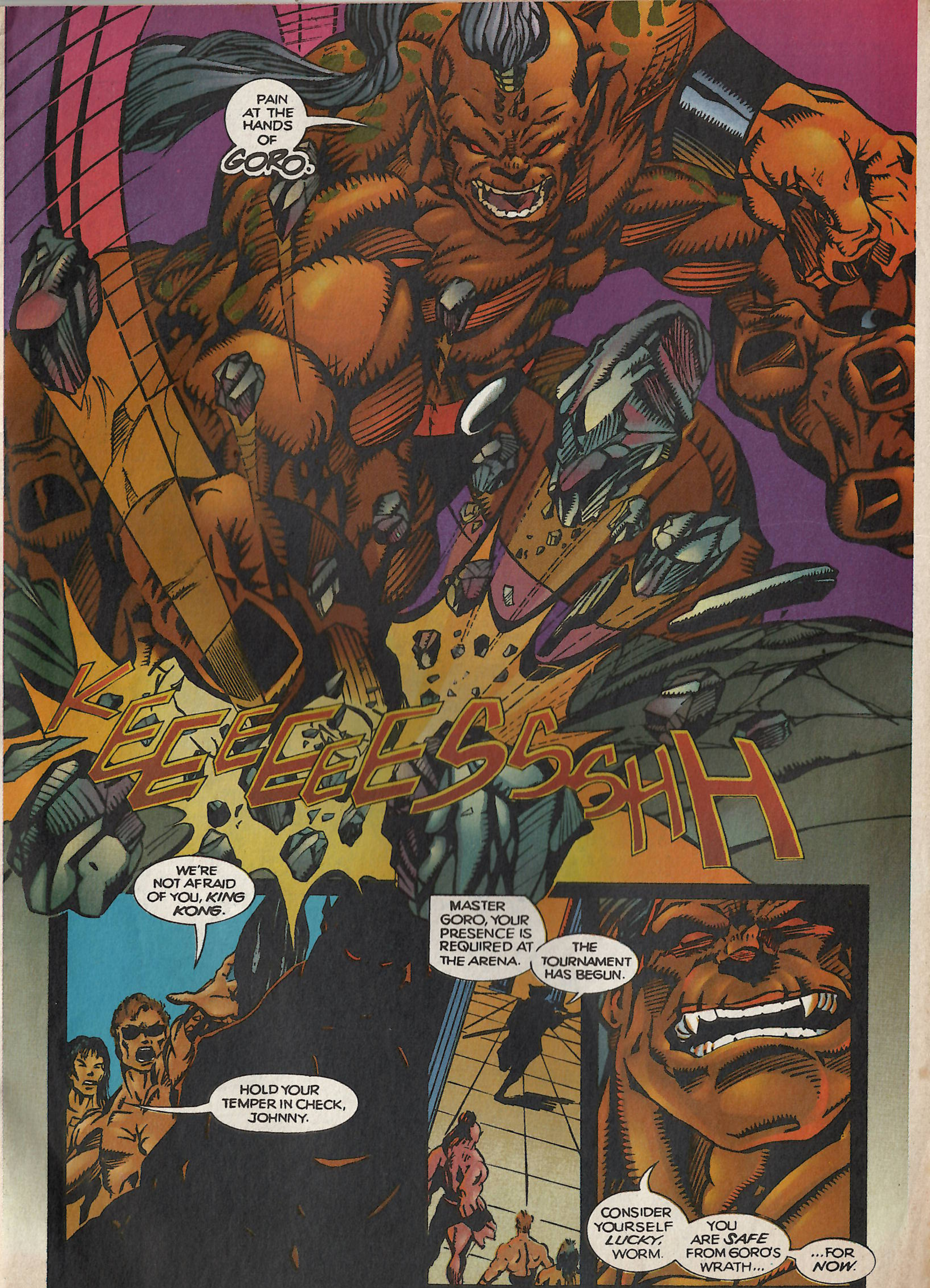
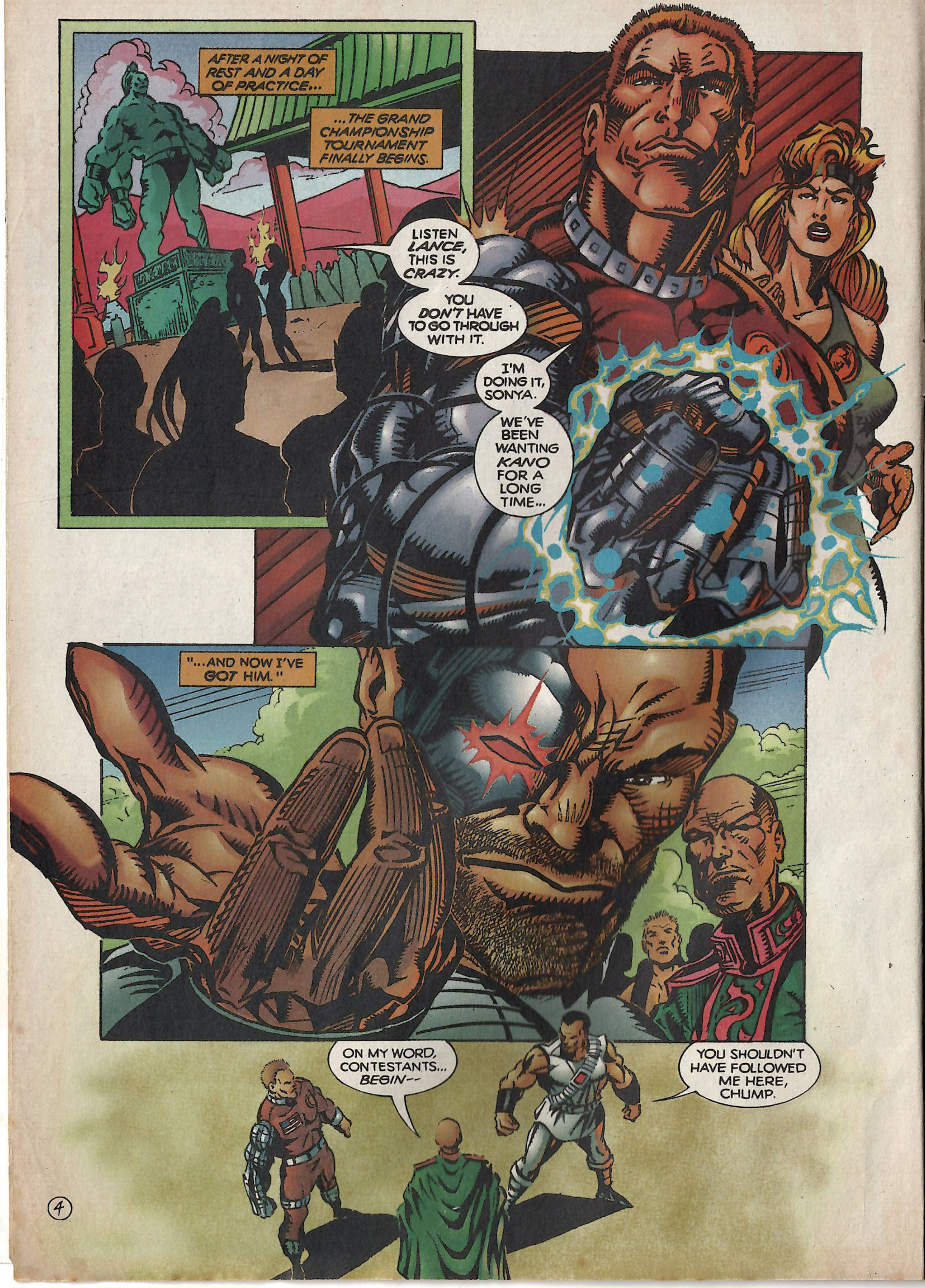
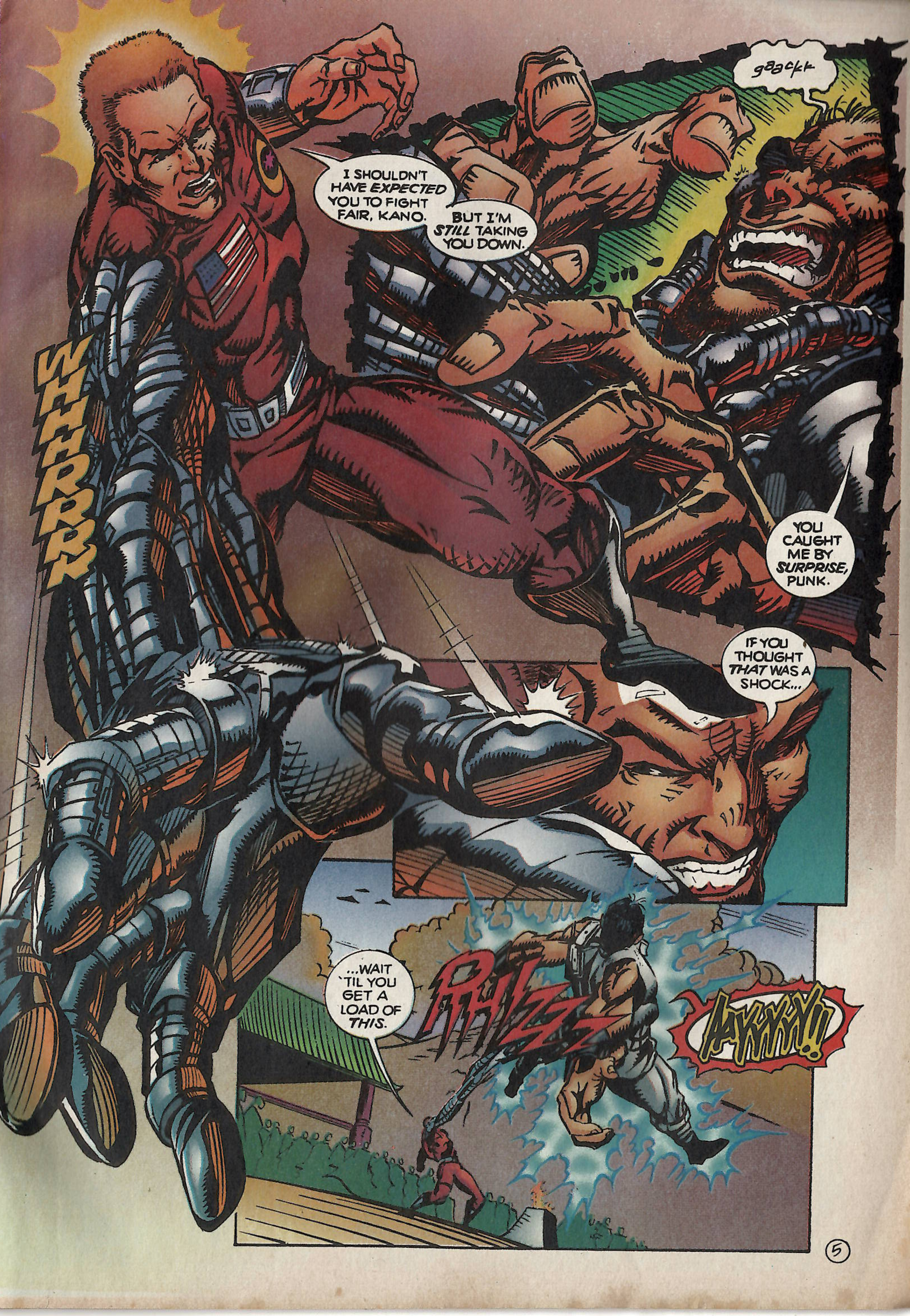
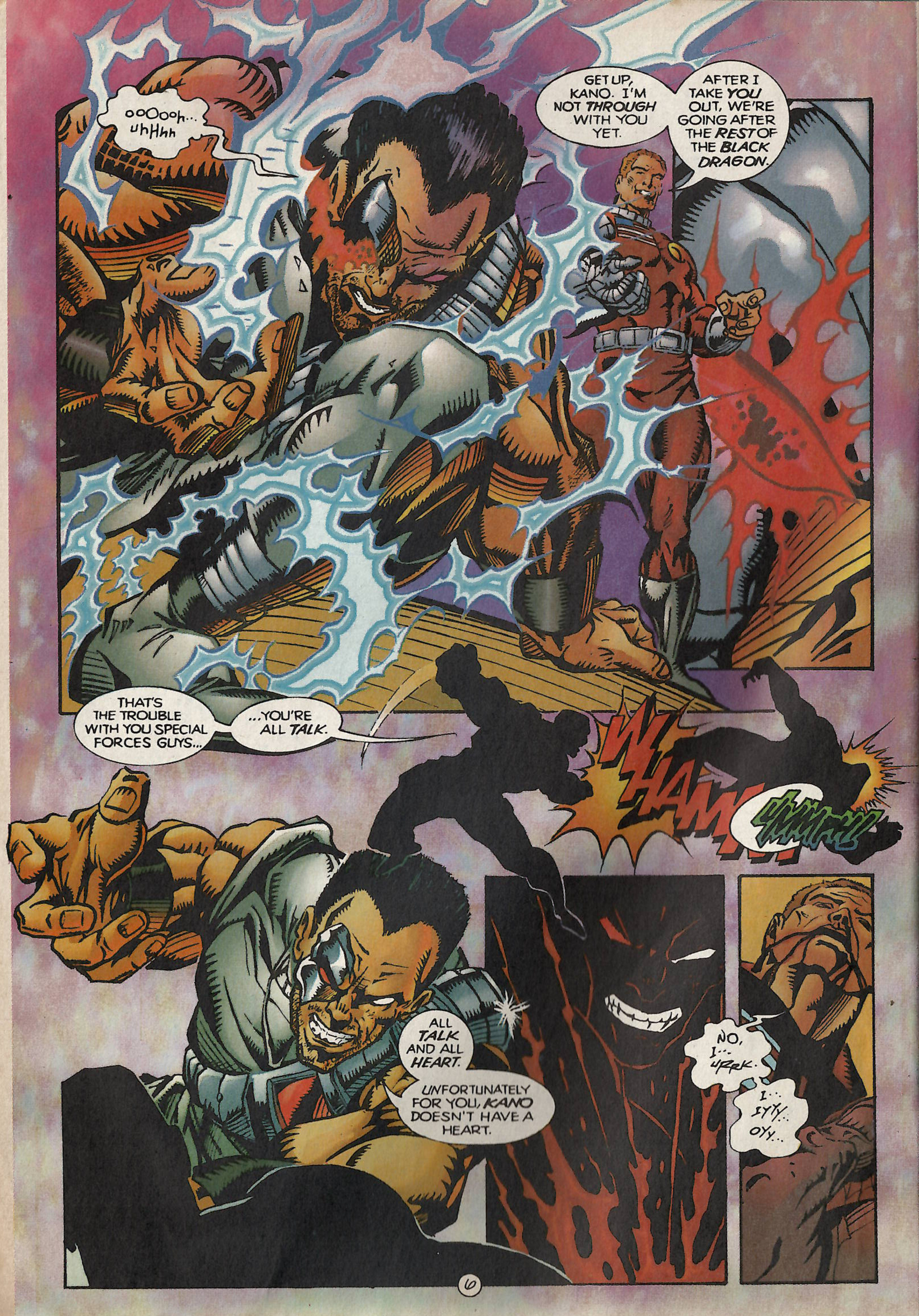
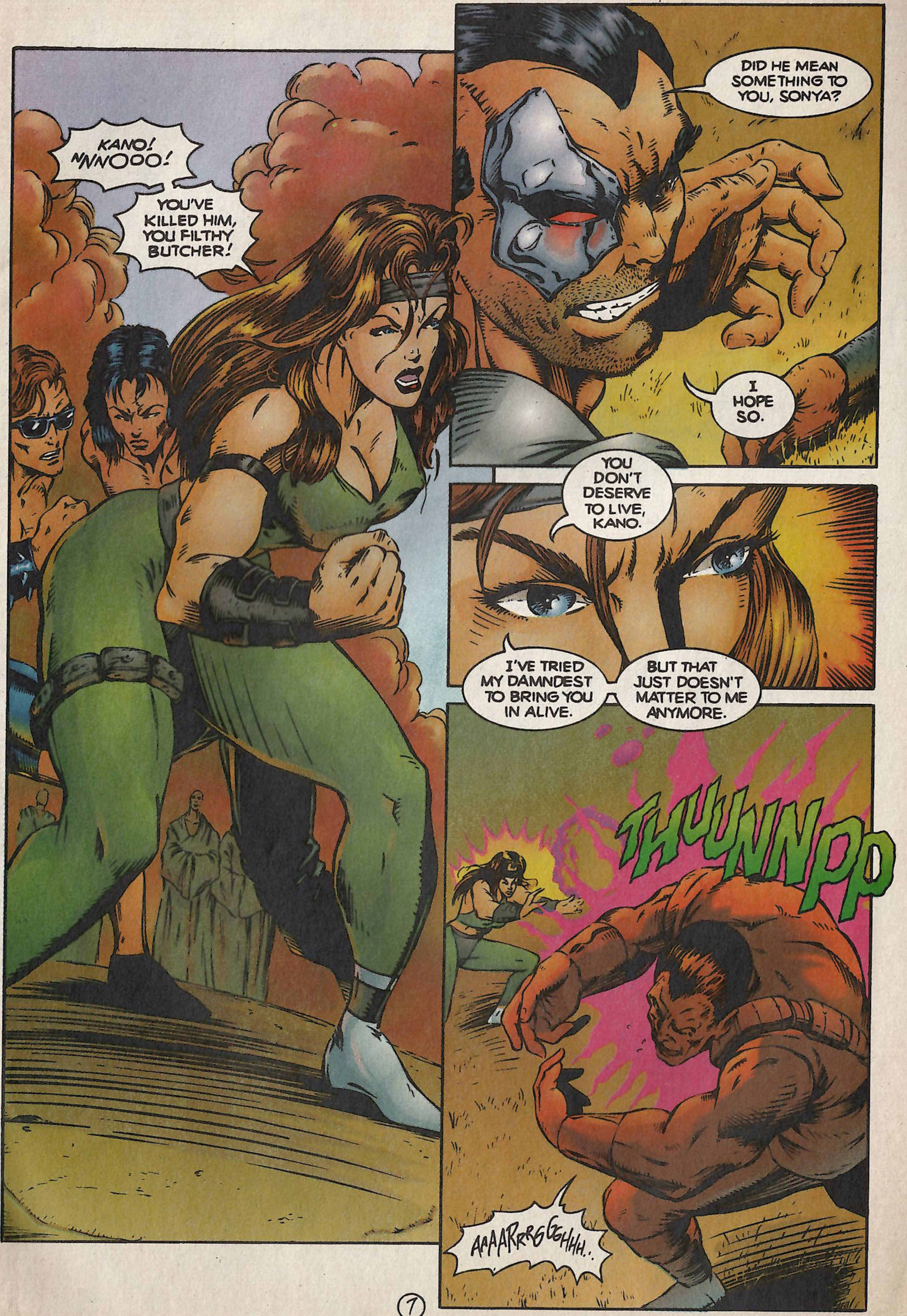

THE PRIESTS OF THE ORDER OF LIGHT HAVE PINNED THEIR HOPES OF REGAINING THE TITLE ON ANOTHER FIGHTER.
YAAAAAHH!!
BUT THAT ONLY MAKES LIU KANG TRY THAT MUCH HARDER.
NOT BAD, MY FRIEND.
I DID THAT ONCE IN ONE OF MY MOVIES.
THIS IS *NOT* MAKE BELIEVE, JOHNNY CAGE.
YOU ARE *SO* CORRECT, WORM.
YOU HAVE COME HERE SEEKING *HONOR* AND *GLORY*.
BUT THE *ONLY* THING YOU SHALL FIND IN THIS PLACE IS *PAIN*.

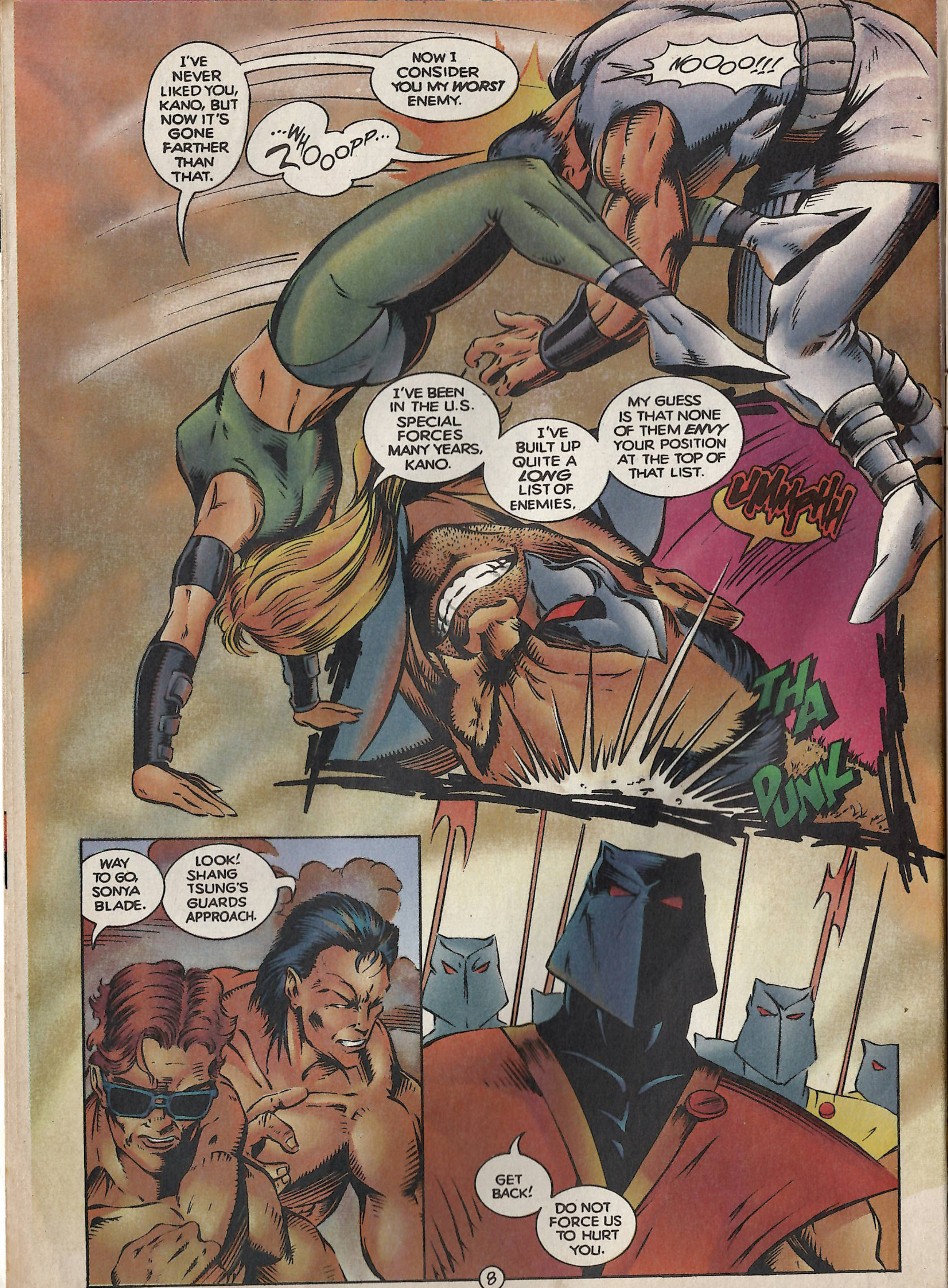

PAIN AT THE HANDS OF GORO.
KEEEEEESSSHH
WE'RE NOT AFRAID OF YOU, *KING KONG*.
HOLD YOUR TEMPER IN CHECK, JOHNNY.
MASTER GORO, YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUIRED AT THE ARENA.
THE TOURNAMENT HAS BEGUN.
CONSIDER YOURSELF *LUCKY*, WORM.
YOU ARE *SAFE* FROM GORO'S WRATH...
...FOR *NOW*.

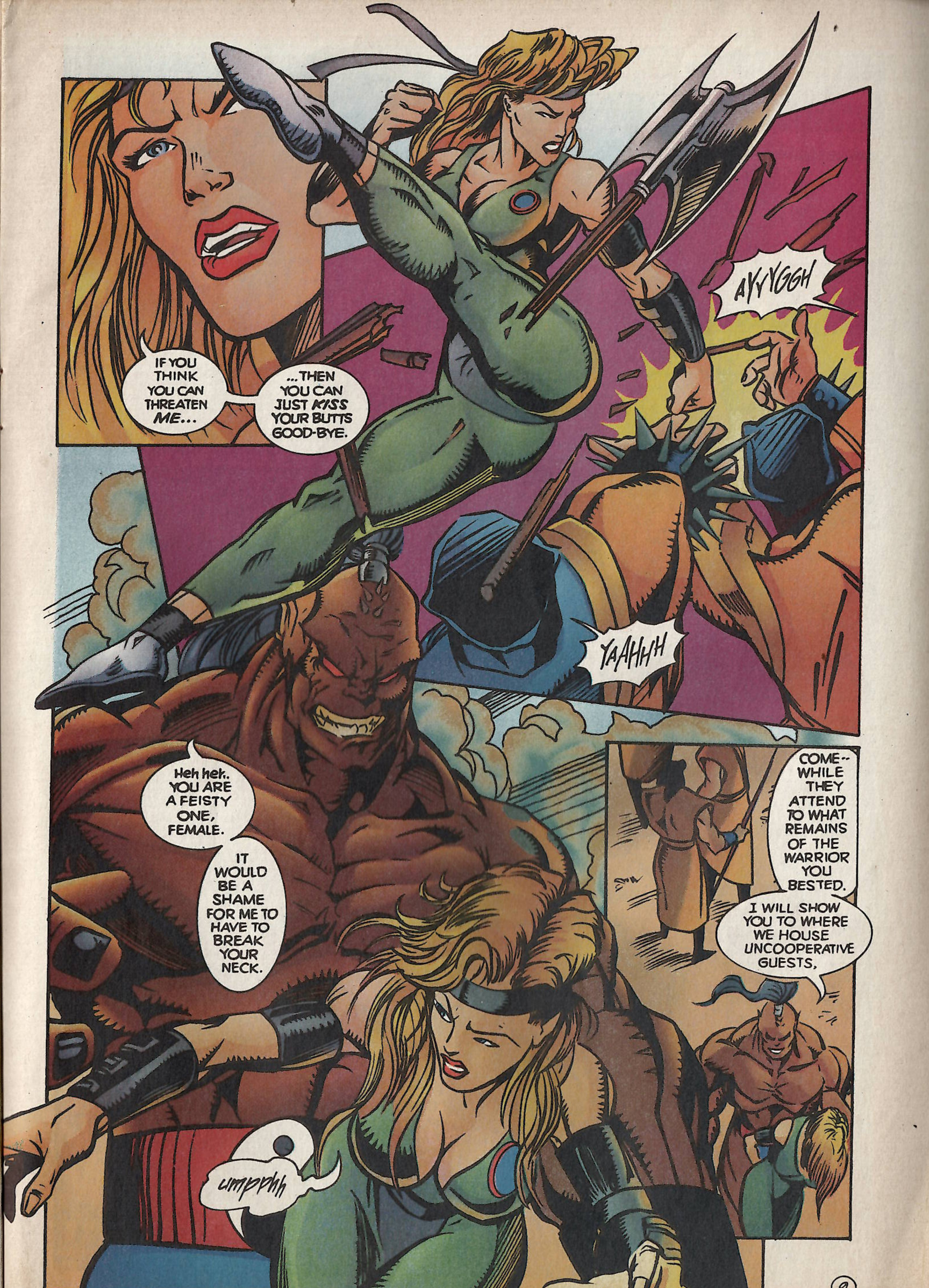

AFTER A NIGHT OF REST AND A DAY OF PRACTICE...
...THE GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT FINALLY BEGINS.
LISTEN *LANCE*, THIS IS *CRAZY*.
YOU *DON'T* HAVE TO GO THROUGH WITH IT.
I'M DOING IT, SONYA.
WE'VE BEEN WANTING *KANO* FOR A LONG TIME...
"...AND NOW I'VE *GOT* HIM."
ON MY WORD, CONTESTANTS... *BEGIN*--
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE FOLLOWED ME HERE, CHUMP.

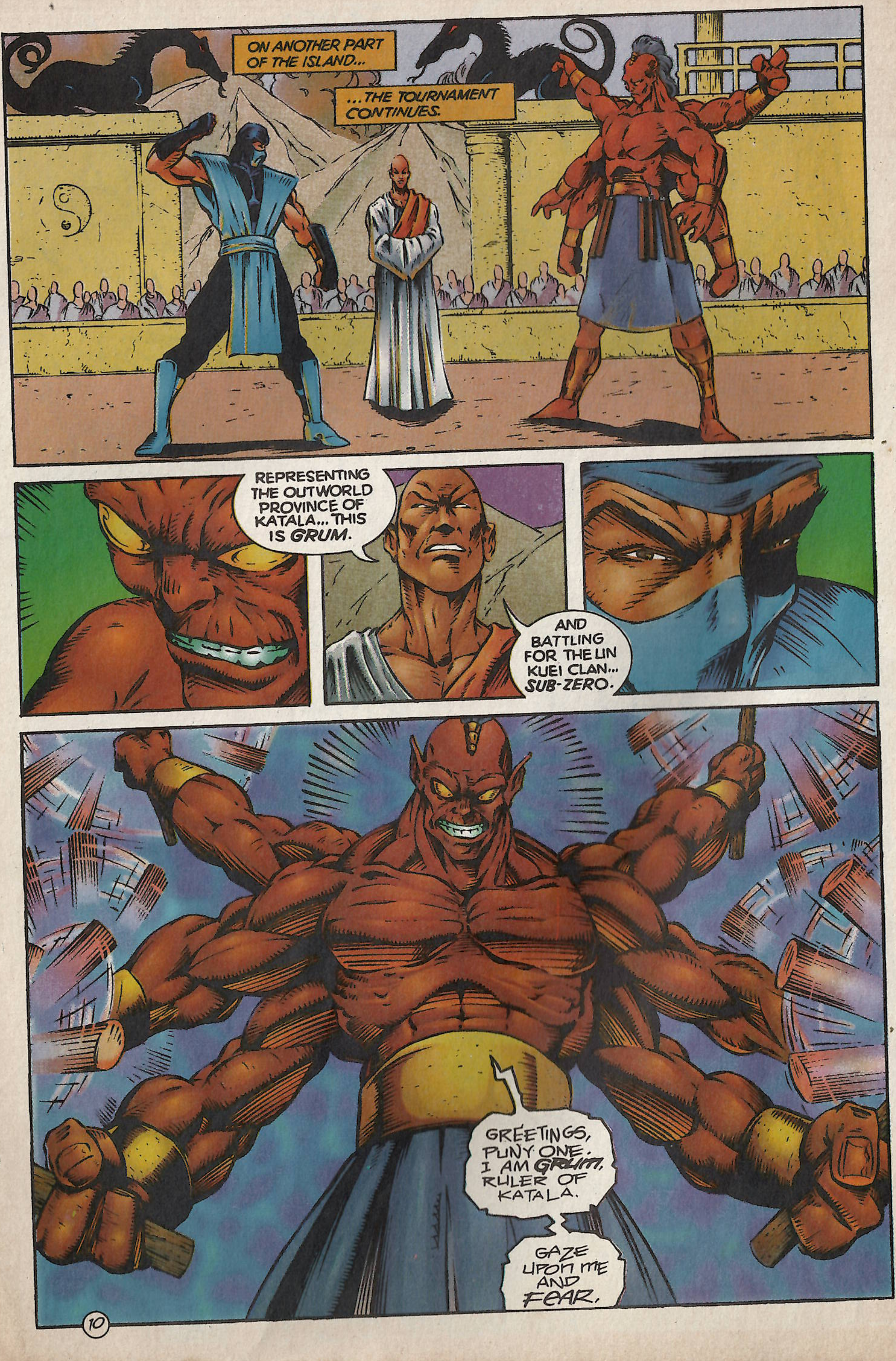

gack
I SHOULDN'T HAVE *EXPECTED* YOU TO FIGHT FAIR, KANO.
BUT I'M *STILL* TAKING YOU DOWN.
WHHRRR
YOU CAUGHT ME BY *SURPRISE*, PUNK.
IF YOU THOUGHT *THAT* WAS A SHOCK...
...WAIT 'TIL YOU GET A LOAD OF *THIS*.
RHIZZZ
AAYYYYY!!

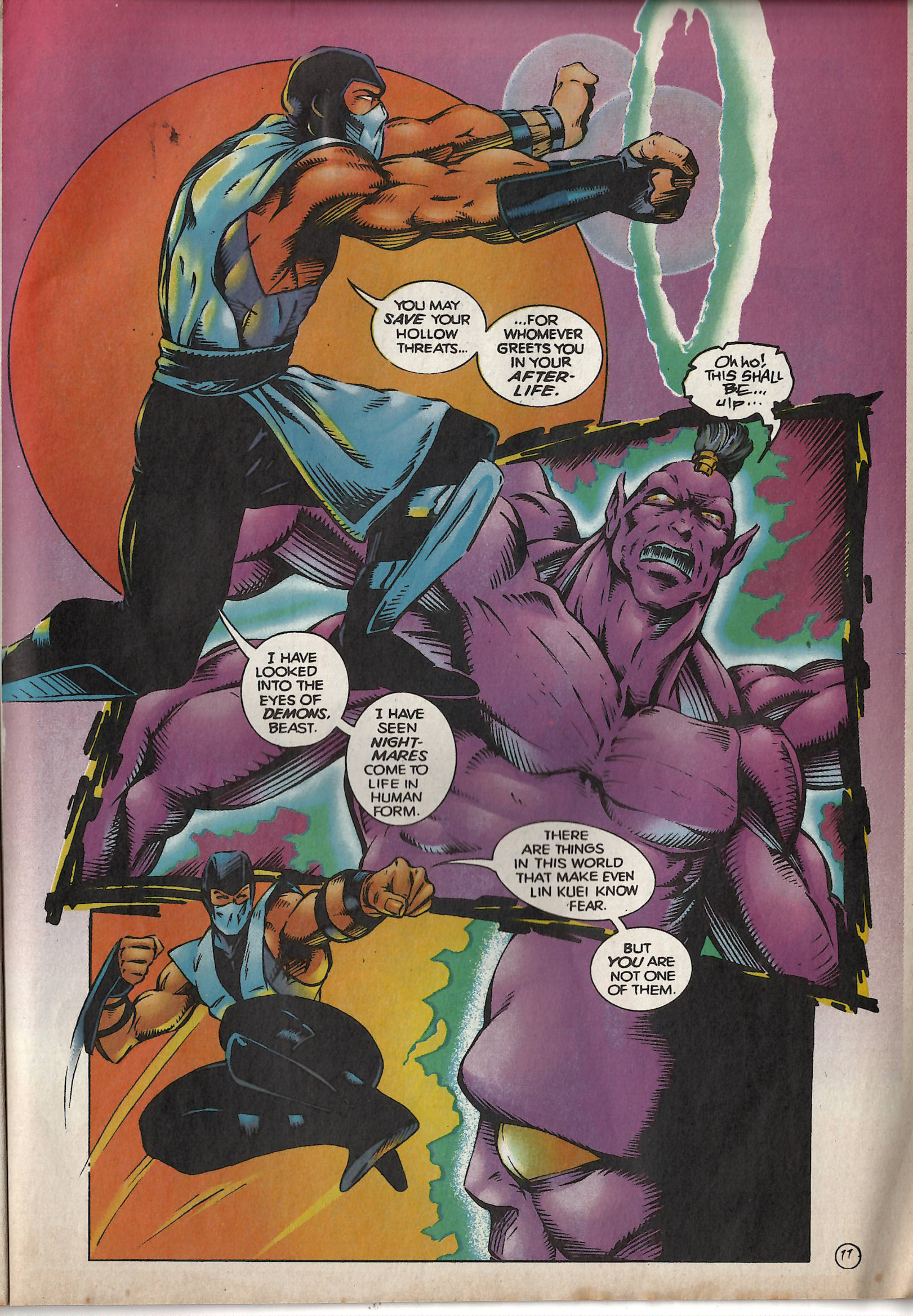

oooOooh... uhhhh
GET UP, KANO. I'M NOT THROUGH WITH YOU YET.
AFTER I TAKE YOU OUT, WE'RE GOING AFTER THE REST OF THE BLACK DRAGON.
THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH YOU SPECIAL FORCES GUYS...
...YOU'RE ALL TALK.
WHAM!!
UHMPH!!
ALL TALK AND ALL HEART.
UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, KANO DOESN'T HAVE A HEART.
NO, I... URRK.
I... SYYY... OYY...

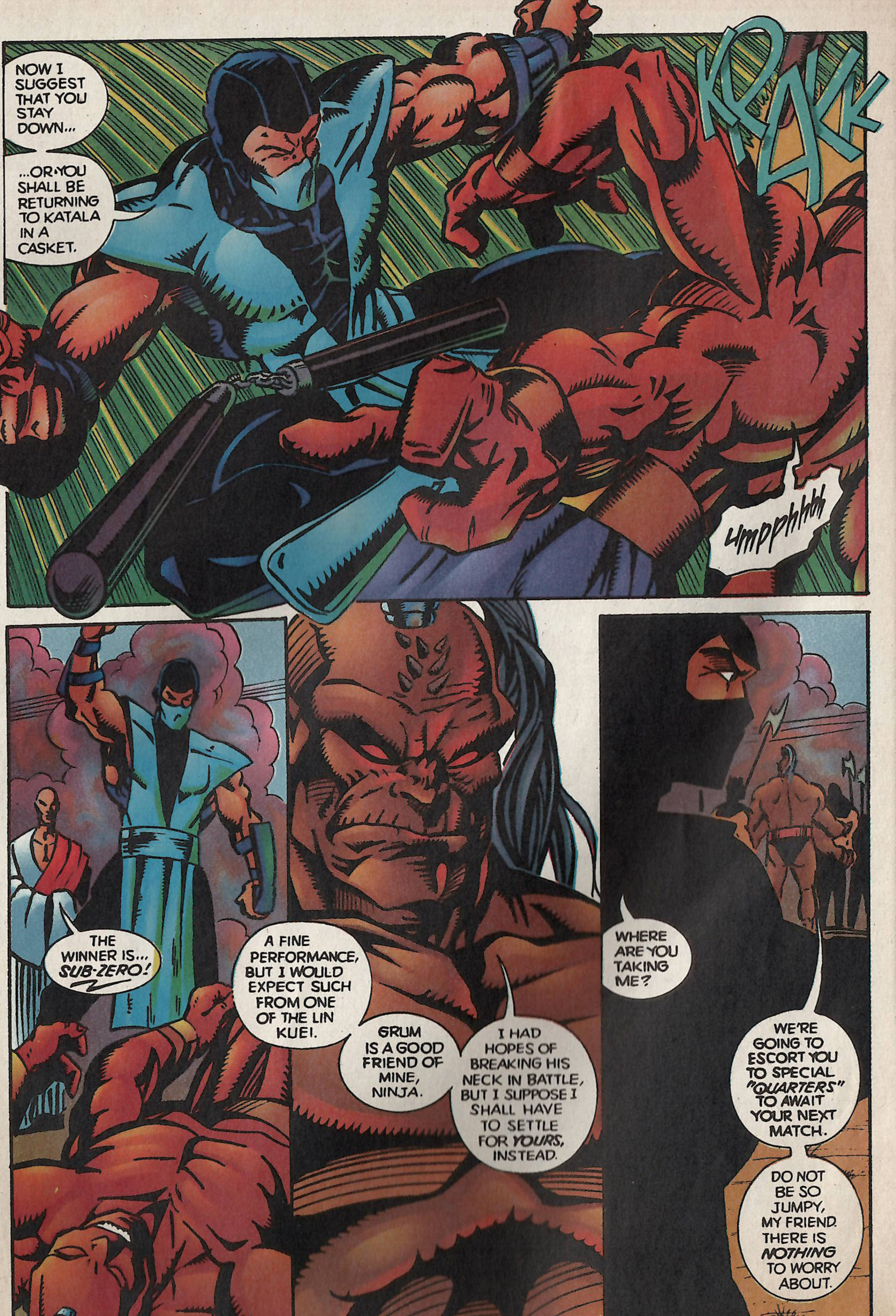

KANO! NNNOOO!
YOU'VE KILLED HIM, YOU FILTHY BUTCHER!
DID HE MEAN SOMETHING TO YOU, SONYA?
I HOPE SO.
YOU DON'T DESERVE TO LIVE, KANO.
I'VE TRIED MY DAMNDEST TO BRING YOU IN ALIVE.
BUT THAT JUST DOESN'T MATTER TO ME ANYMORE.
THUUNNPP
AAAARRGGGHHH..

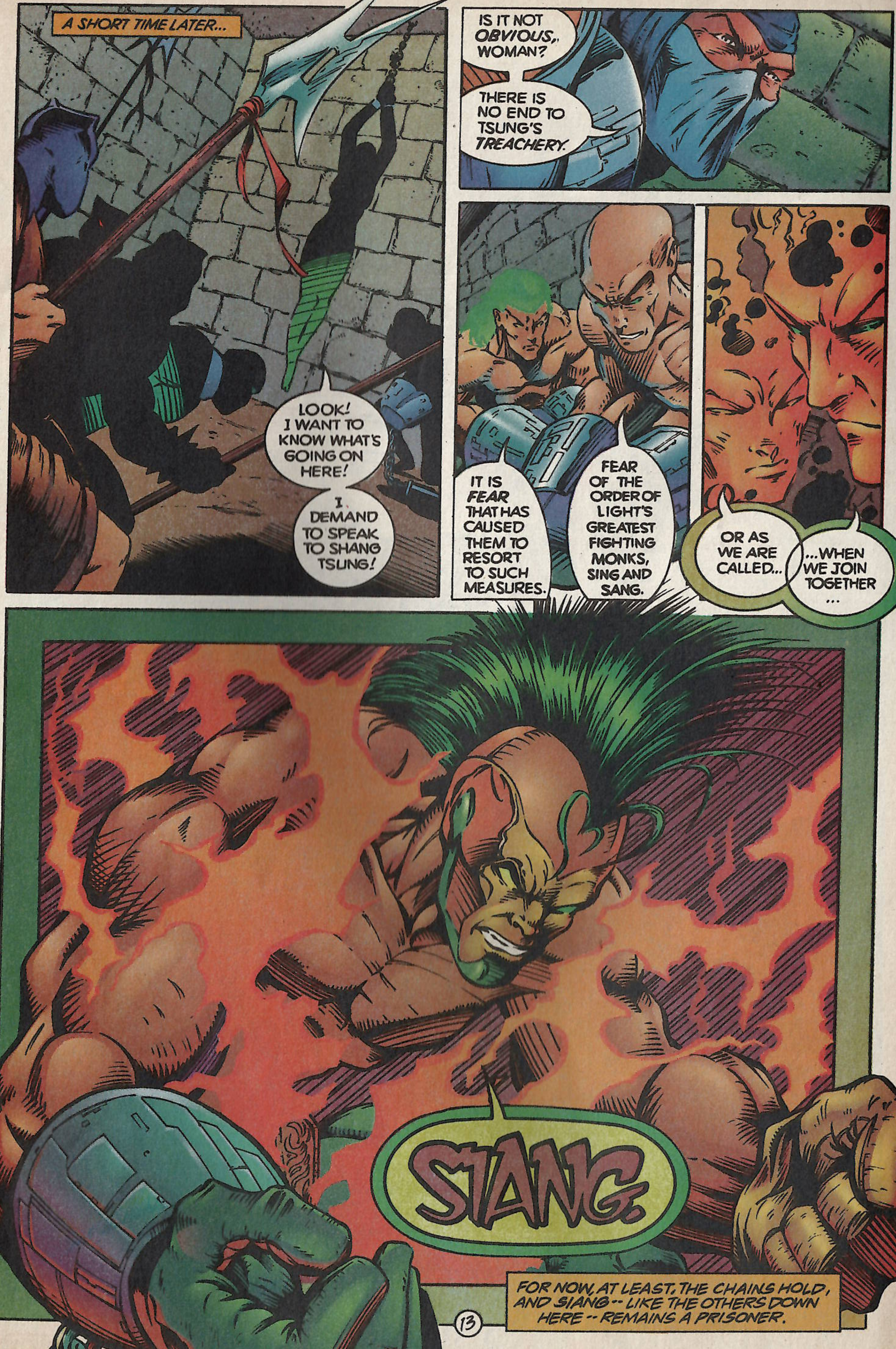

I'VE NEVER LIKED YOU, KANO, BUT NOW IT'S GONE FARTHER THAN THAT.
NOW I CONSIDER YOU MY *WORST* ENEMY.
NOOOO!!!
...WHOOOPP...
I'VE BEEN IN THE U.S. SPECIAL FORCES MANY YEARS, KANO.
I'VE BUILT UP QUITE A *LONG* LIST OF ENEMIES.
MY GUESS IS THAT NONE OF THEM *ENVY* YOUR POSITION AT THE TOP OF THAT LIST.
UMMPHH
THA DUNK
WAY TO GO, SONYA BLADE.
LOOK! SHANG TSUNG'S GUARDS APPROACH.
GET BACK! DO NOT FORCE US TO HURT YOU.

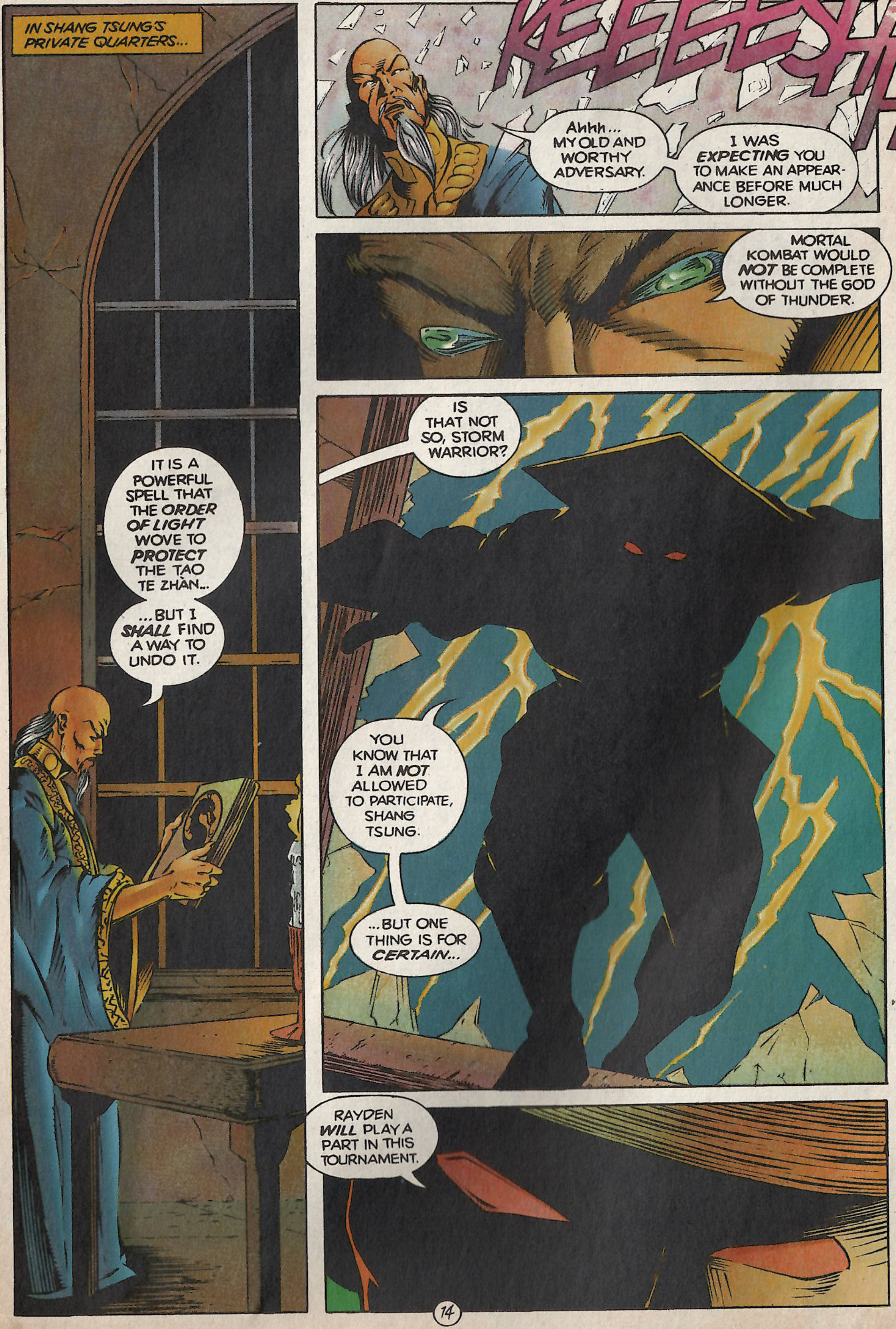

IF YOU THINK YOU CAN THREATEN *ME*...
...THEN YOU CAN JUST *KISS* YOUR BUTTS GOOD-BYE.
AYYYGGH
YAAHHH
Heh heh. YOU ARE A FEISTY ONE, FEMALE.
IT WOULD BE A SHAME FOR ME TO HAVE TO BREAK YOUR NECK.
COME-- WHILE THEY ATTEND TO WHAT REMAINS OF THE WARRIOR YOU BESTED,
I WILL SHOW YOU TO WHERE WE HOUSE UNCOOPERATIVE GUESTS.
umpphh

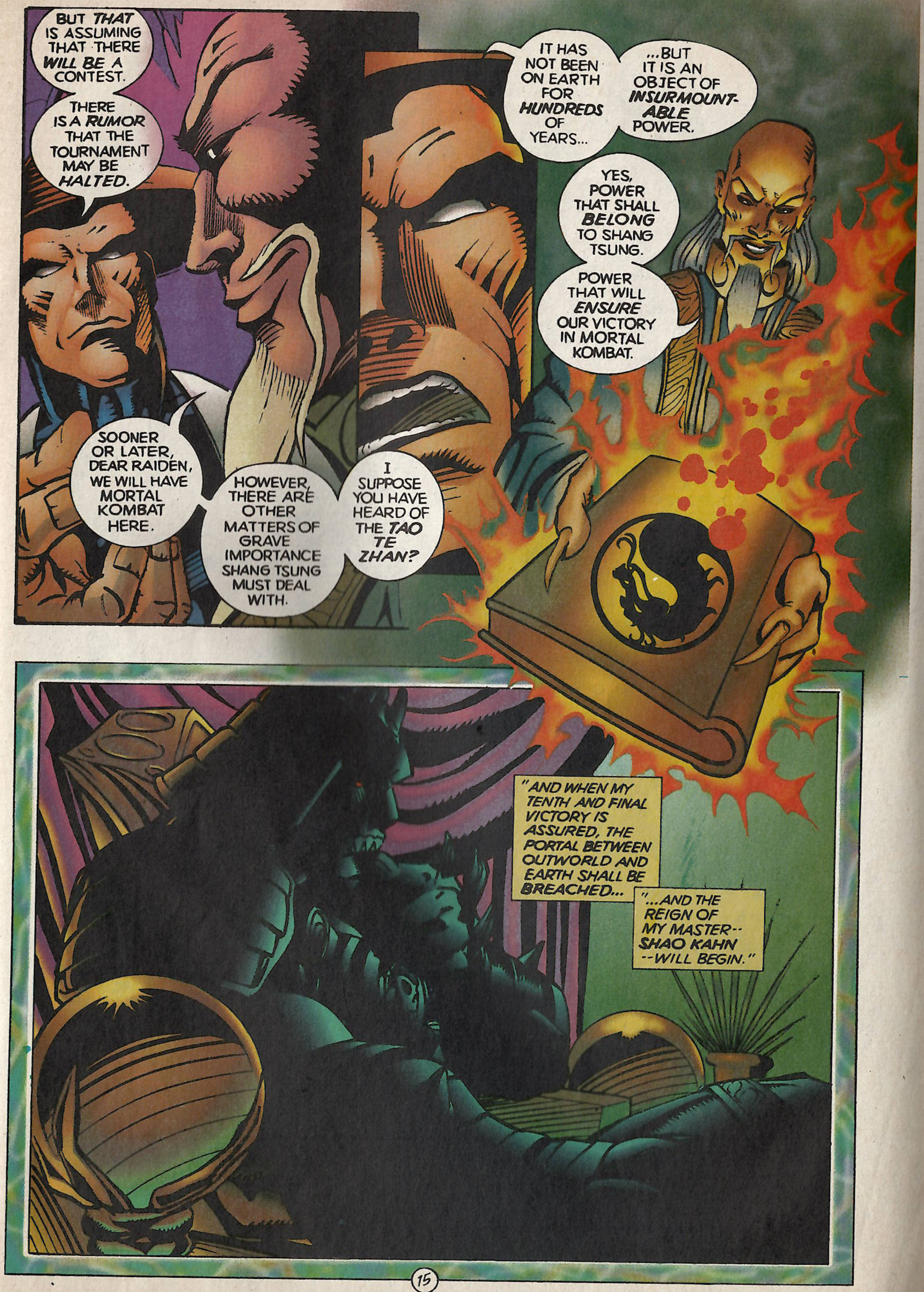

ON ANOTHER PART OF THE ISLAND...
...THE TOURNAMENT CONTINUES.
REPRESENTING THE OUTWORLD PROVINCE OF KATALA... THIS IS GRUM.
AND BATTLING FOR THE LIN KUEI CLAN... SUB-ZERO.
GREETINGS, PUNY ONE. I AM GRUM, RULER OF KATALA.
GAZE UPON ME AND FEAR.

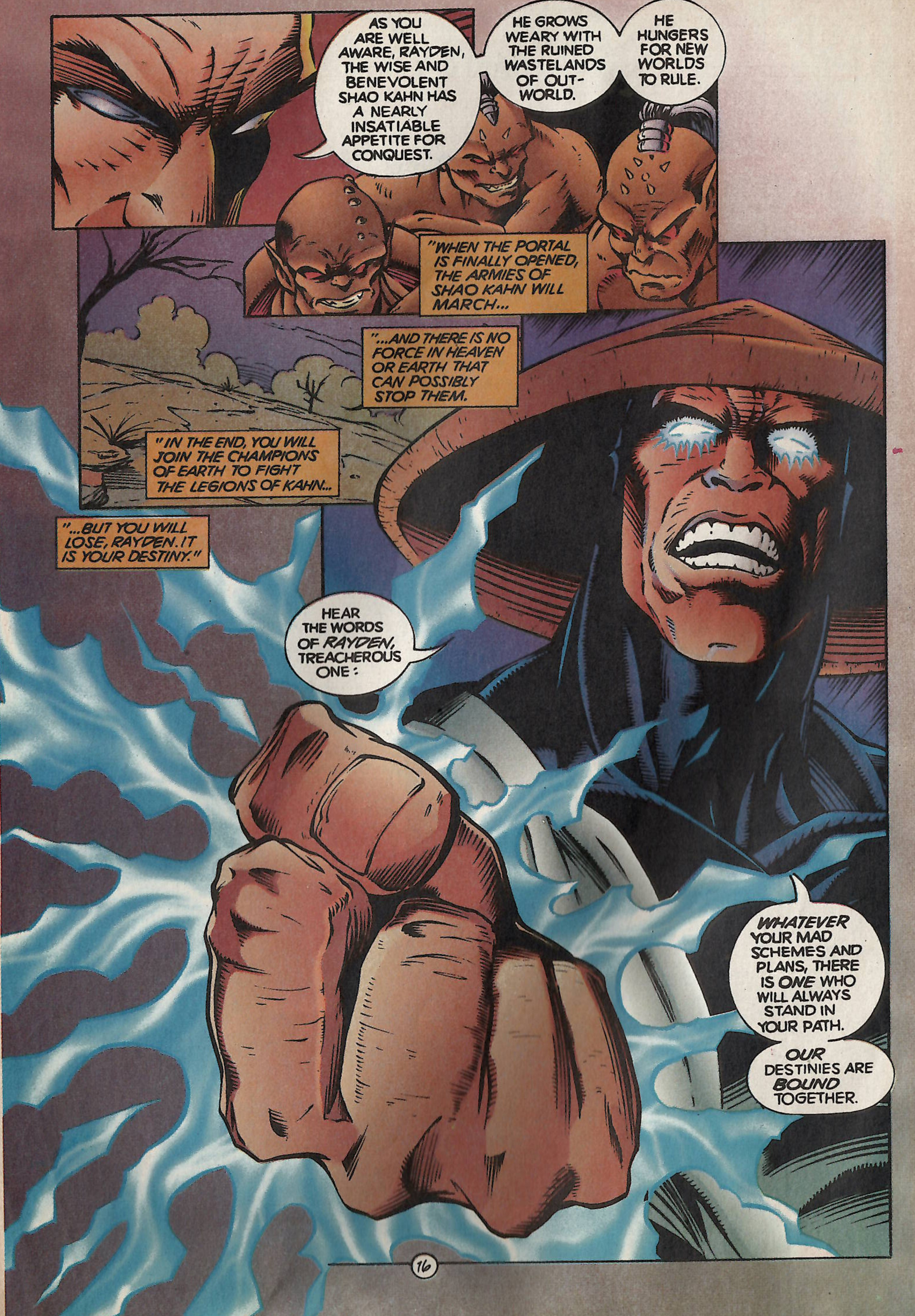

YOU MAY SAVE YOUR HOLLOW THREATS...
...FOR WHOMEVER GREETS YOU IN YOUR AFTER-LIFE.
Oh ho! THIS SHALL BE... ulp...
I HAVE LOOKED INTO THE EYES OF DEMONS, BEAST.
I HAVE SEEN NIGHT-MARES COME TO LIFE IN HUMAN FORM.
THERE ARE THINGS IN THIS WORLD THAT MAKE EVEN LIN KUEI KNOW FEAR.
BUT YOU ARE NOT ONE OF THEM.

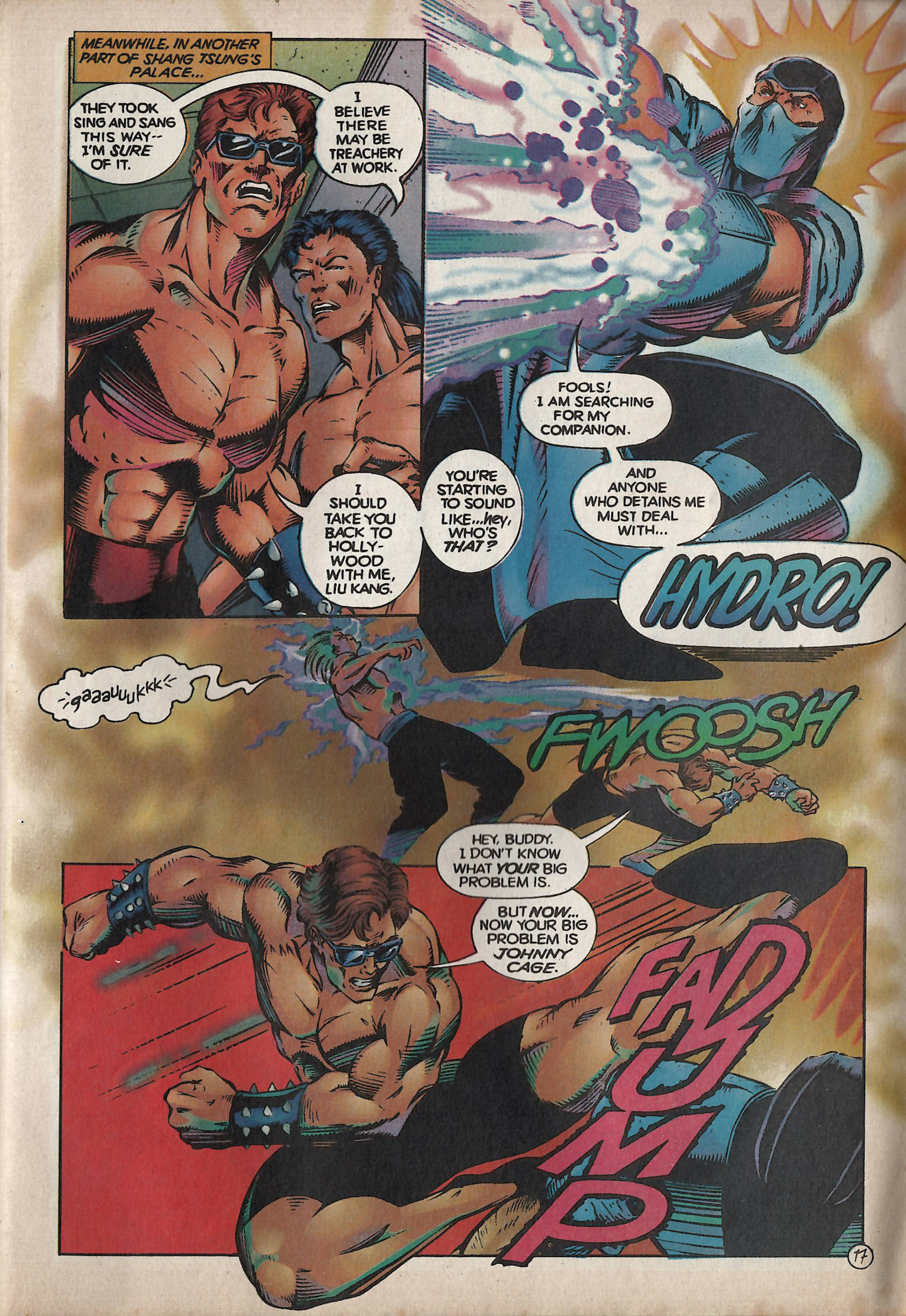

NOW I SUGGEST THAT YOU STAY DOWN...
...OR YOU SHALL BE RETURNING TO KATALA IN A CASKET.
KRAKK
Umpphhhh
THE WINNER IS... *SUB-ZERO!*
A FINE PERFORMANCE, BUT I WOULD EXPECT SUCH FROM ONE OF THE LIN KUEI.
GRUM IS A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, NINJA.
I HAD HOPES OF BREAKING HIS NECK IN BATTLE, BUT I SUPPOSE I SHALL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR *YOURS*, INSTEAD.
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?
WE'RE GOING TO ESCORT YOU TO SPECIAL *"QUARTERS"* TO AWAIT YOUR NEXT MATCH.
DO NOT BE SO JUMPY, MY FRIEND. THERE IS *NOTHING* TO WORRY ABOUT.

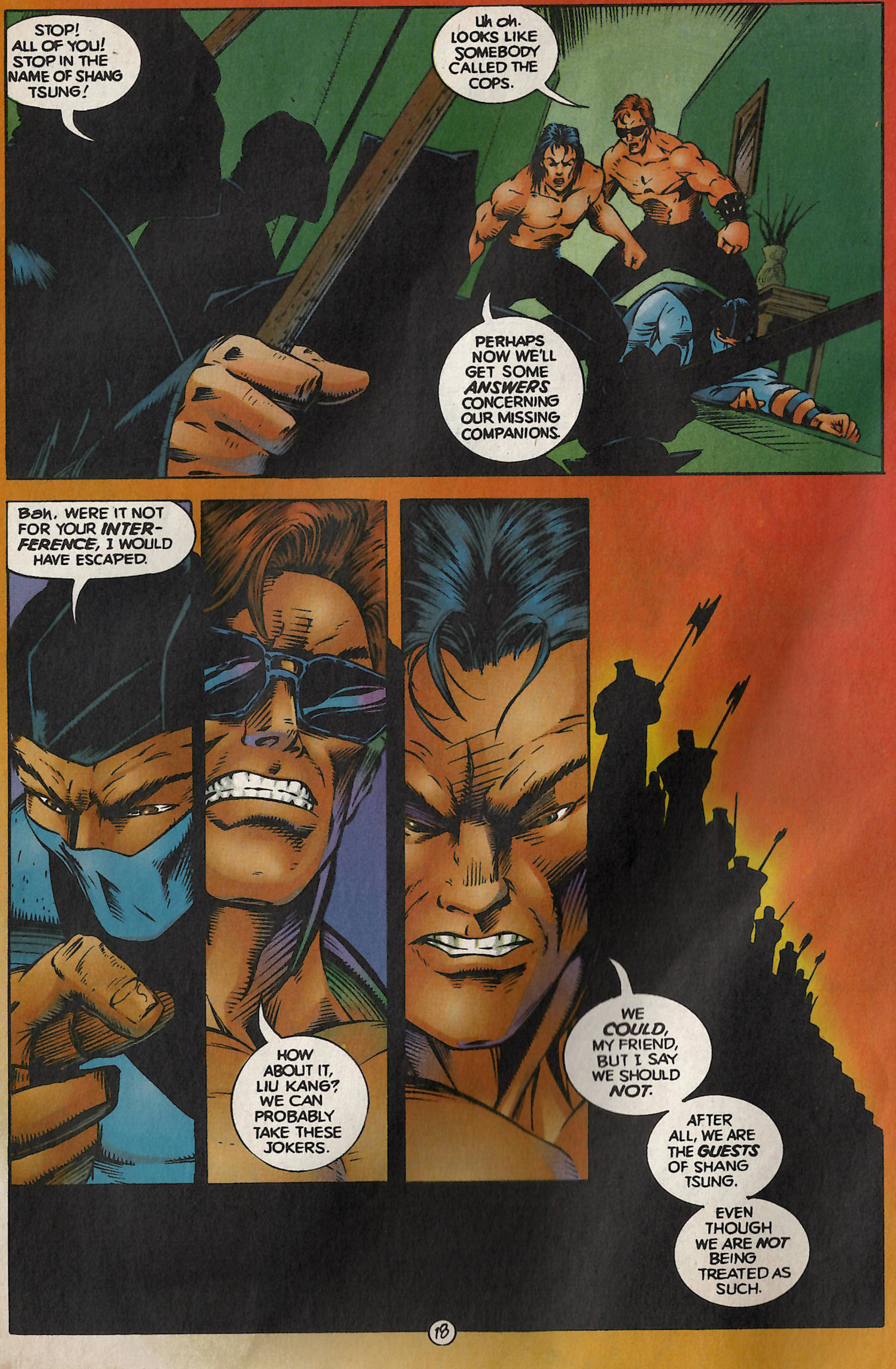

A SHORT TIME LATER...
LOOK! I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!
I DEMAND TO SPEAK TO SHANG TSUNG!
IS IT NOT *OBVIOUS*, WOMAN?
THERE IS NO END TO TSUNG'S *TREACHERY*.
IT IS *FEAR* THAT HAS CAUSED THEM TO RESORT TO SUCH MEASURES.
FEAR OF THE ORDER OF LIGHT'S GREATEST FIGHTING MONKS, SING AND SANG.
OR AS WE ARE CALLED...
...WHEN WE JOIN TOGETHER...
SIANG.
FOR NOW, AT LEAST, THE CHAINS HOLD, AND SIANG -- LIKE THE OTHERS DOWN HERE -- REMAINS A PRISONER.

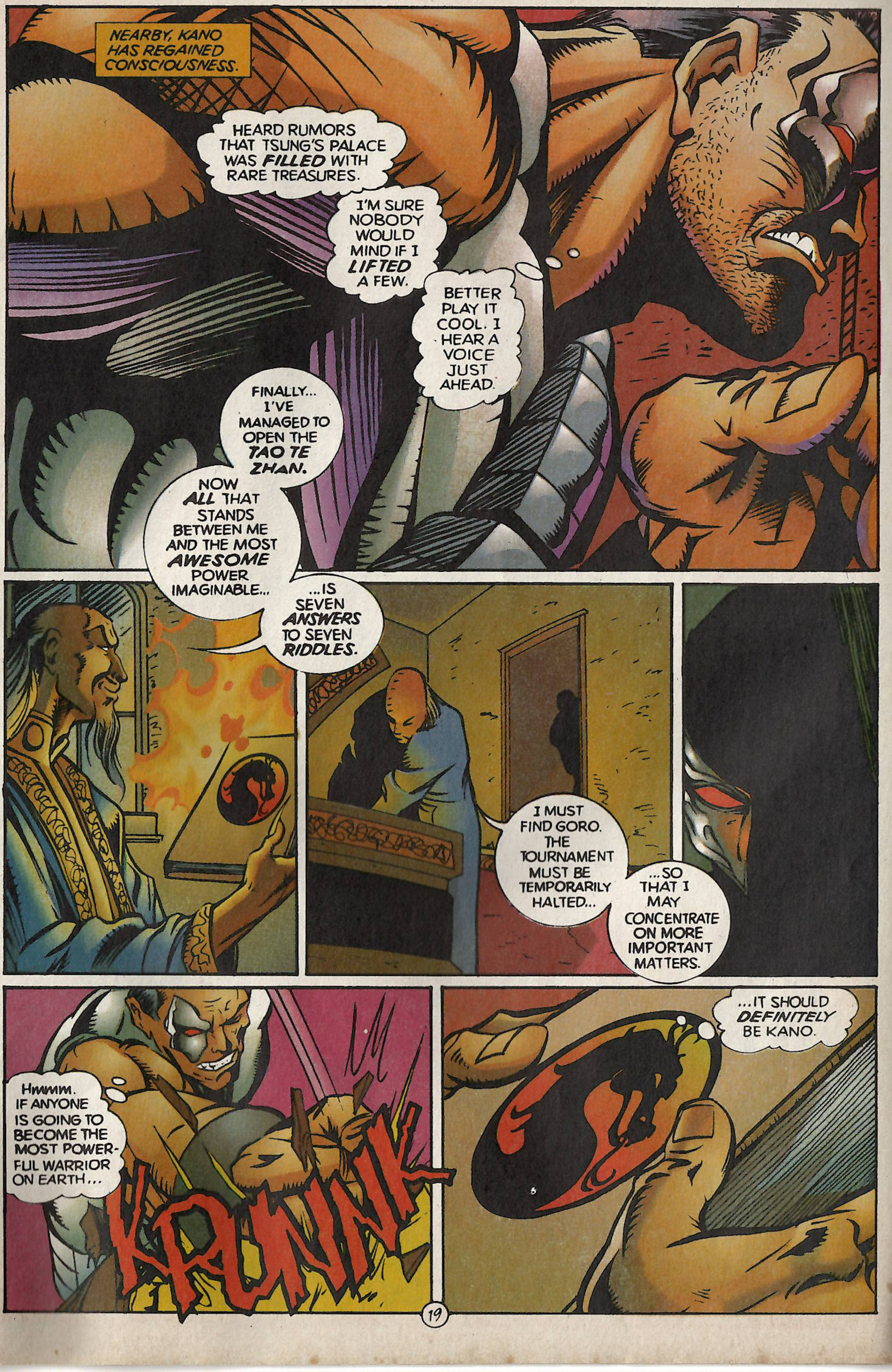

IN SHANG TSUNG'S PRIVATE QUARTERS...
IT IS A POWERFUL SPELL THAT THE *ORDER OF LIGHT* WOVE TO *PROTECT* THE TAO TE ZHĀN...
...BUT I *SHALL* FIND A WAY TO UNDO IT.
KEEEESHH
Ahhh... MY OLD AND WORTHY ADVERSARY.
I WAS *EXPECTING* YOU TO MAKE AN APPEARANCE BEFORE MUCH LONGER.
MORTAL KOMBAT WOULD *NOT* BE COMPLETE WITHOUT THE GOD OF THUNDER.
IS THAT NOT SO, STORM WARRIOR?
YOU KNOW THAT *I AM NOT* ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE, SHANG TSUNG.
...BUT ONE THING IS FOR *CERTAIN*...
RAYDEN *WILL* PLAY A PART IN THIS TOURNAMENT.

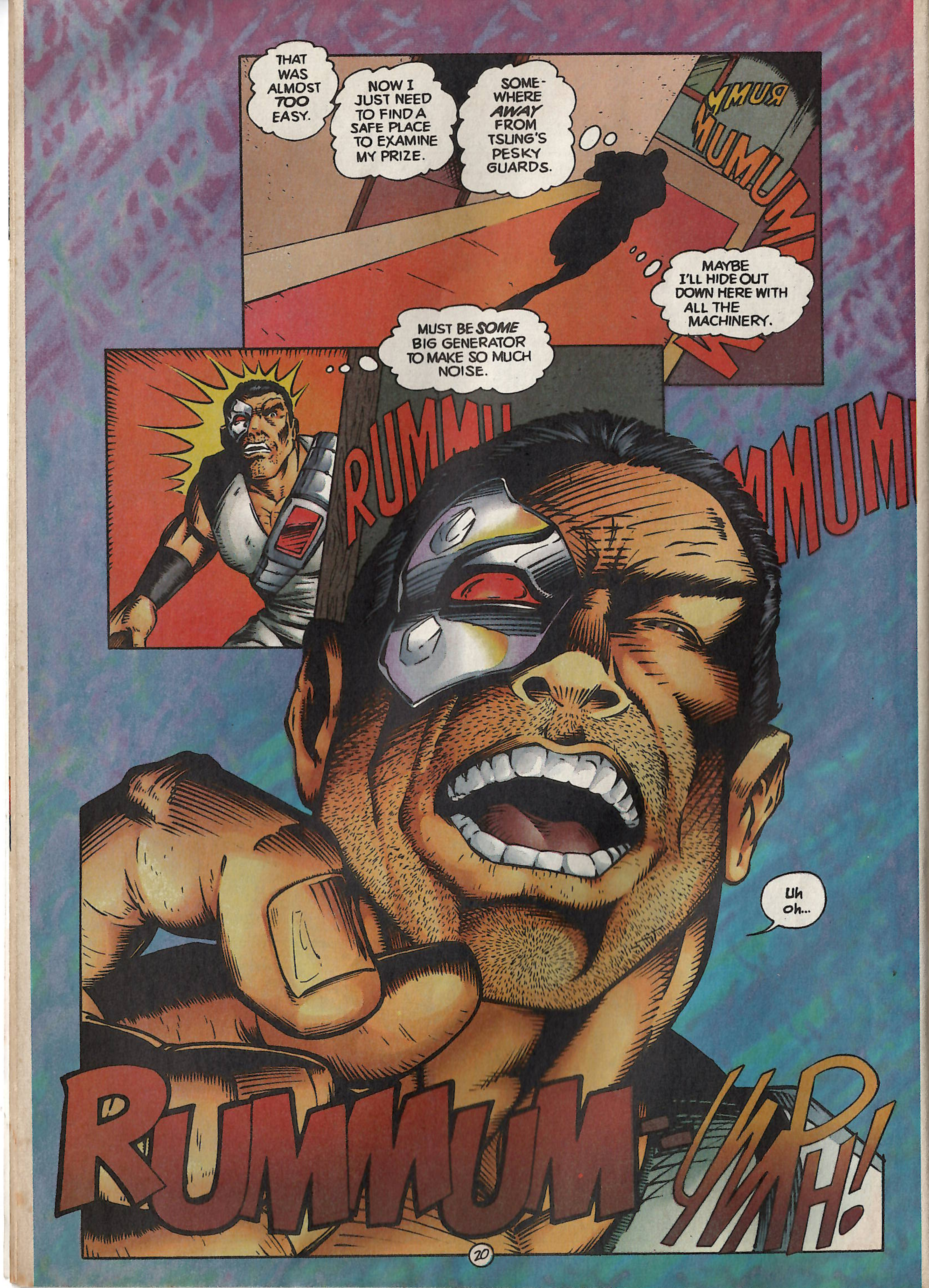

BUT *THAT* IS ASSUMING THAT THERE *WILL BE* A CONTEST.
THERE IS A *RUMOR* THAT THE TOURNAMENT MAY BE *HALTED*.
SOONER OR LATER, DEAR RAIDEN, WE WILL HAVE MORTAL KOMBAT HERE.
HOWEVER, THERE ARE OTHER MATTERS OF GRAVE IMPORTANCE SHANG TSUNG MUST DEAL WITH.
I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE HEARD OF THE *TAO TE ZHAN?*
IT HAS NOT BEEN ON EARTH FOR *HUNDREDS* OF YEARS...
...BUT IT IS AN OBJECT OF *INSURMOUNTABLE* POWER.
YES, POWER THAT SHALL *BELONG* TO SHANG TSUNG.
POWER THAT WILL *ENSURE* OUR VICTORY IN MORTAL KOMBAT.
"AND WHEN MY TENTH AND FINAL VICTORY IS ASSURED, THE PORTAL BETWEEN OUTWORLD AND EARTH SHALL BE *BREACHED*...
"...AND THE REIGN OF MY MASTER-- SHAO KAHN --WILL BEGIN."

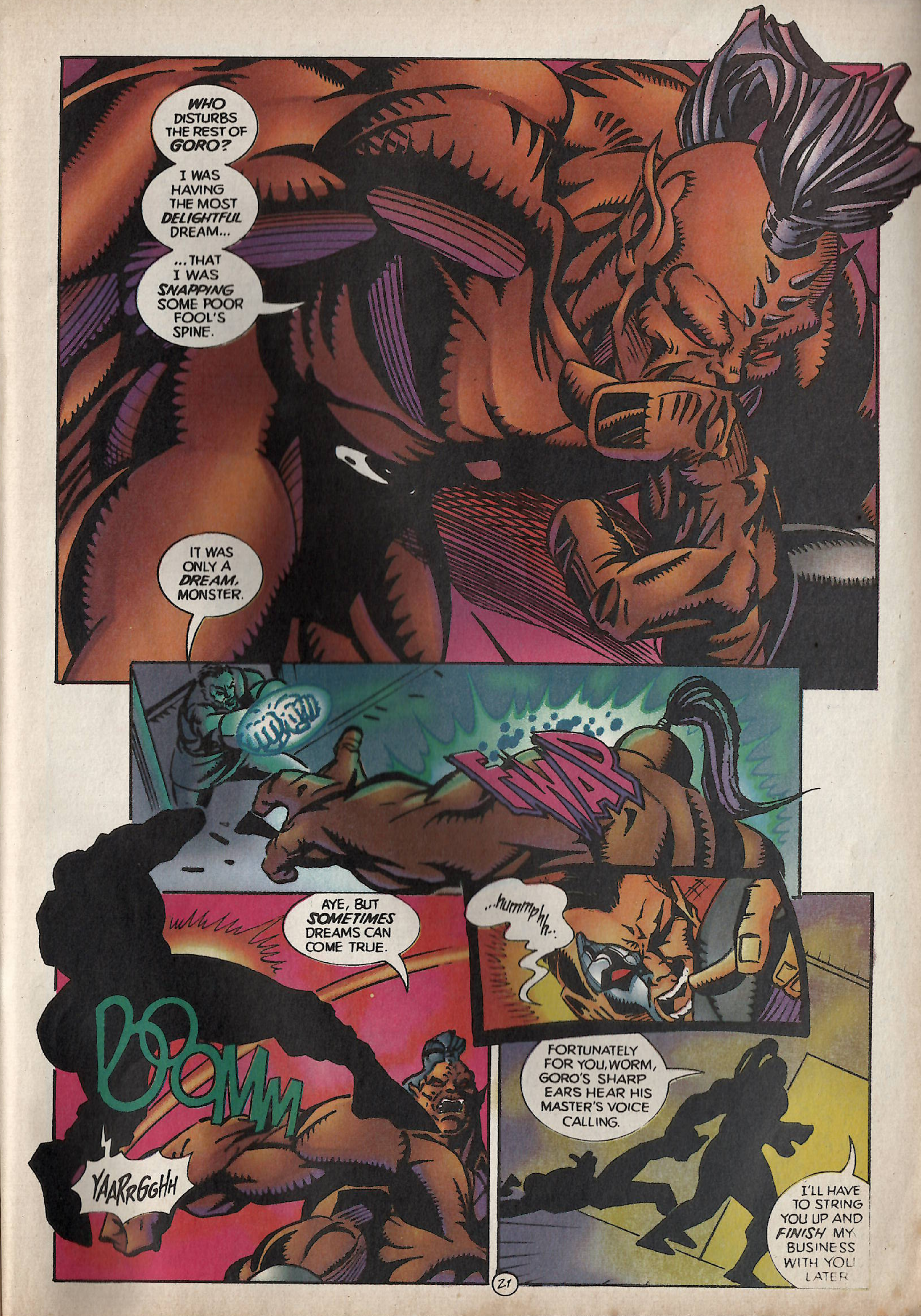

AS YOU ARE WELL AWARE, RAYDEN, THE WISE AND BENEVOLENT SHAO KAHN HAS A NEARLY INSATIABLE APPETITE FOR CONQUEST.
HE GROWS WEARY WITH THE RUINED WASTELANDS OF OUT-WORLD.
HE HUNGERS FOR NEW WORLDS TO RULE.
"WHEN THE PORTAL IS FINALLY OPENED, THE ARMIES OF SHAO KAHN WILL MARCH...
"...AND THERE IS NO FORCE IN HEAVEN OR EARTH THAT CAN POSSIBLY STOP THEM.
"IN THE END, YOU WILL JOIN THE CHAMPIONS OF EARTH TO FIGHT THE LEGIONS OF KAHN...
"...BUT YOU WILL LOSE, RAYDEN. IT IS YOUR DESTINY."
HEAR THE WORDS OF *RAYDEN*, TREACHEROUS ONE:
*WHATEVER* YOUR MAD SCHEMES AND PLANS, THERE IS *ONE* WHO WILL ALWAYS STAND IN YOUR PATH.
*OUR* DESTINIES ARE *BOUND* TOGETHER.

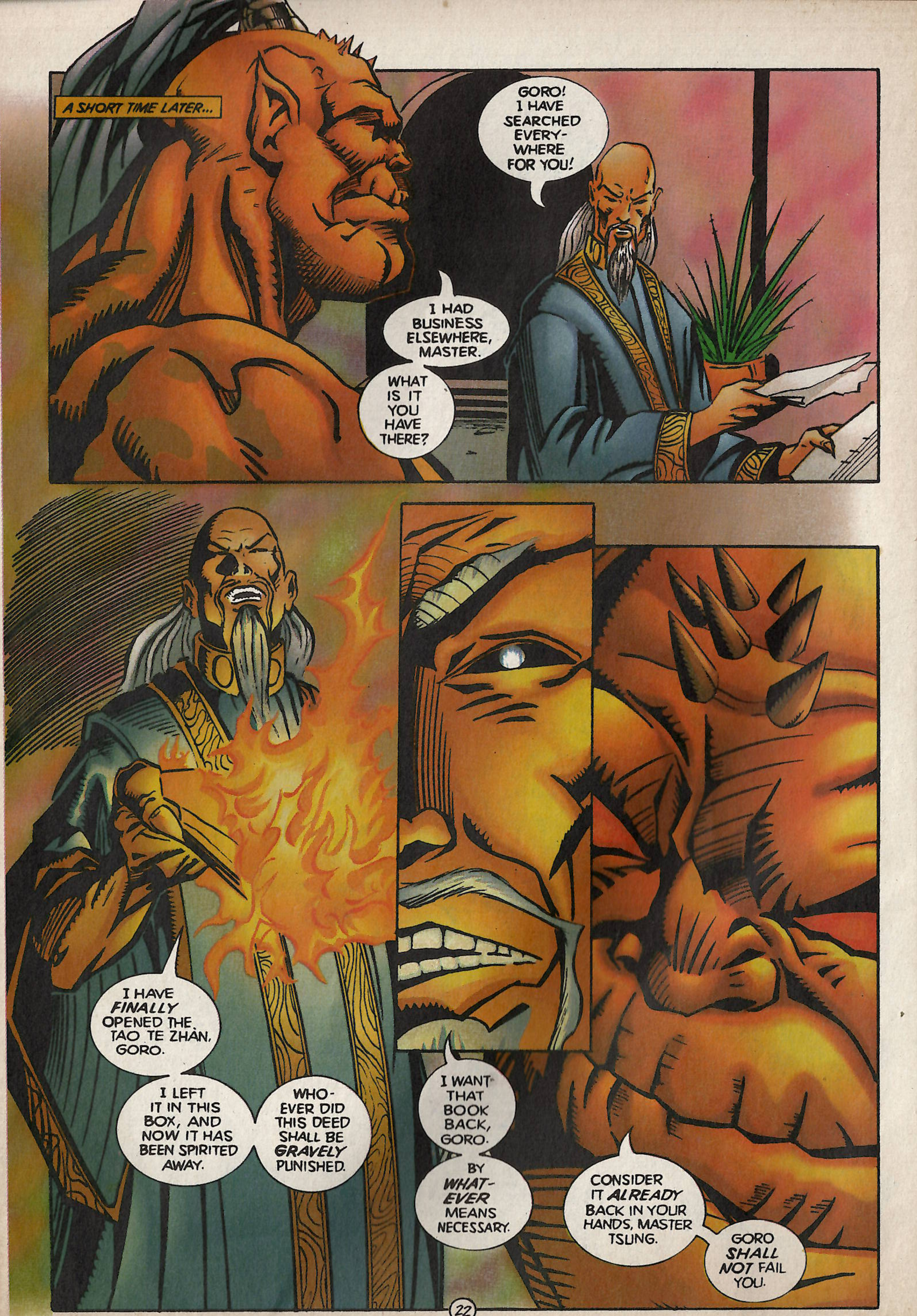

MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER PART OF SHANG TSUNG'S PALACE...
THEY TOOK SING AND SANG THIS WAY-- I'M *SURE* OF IT.
I BELIEVE THERE MAY BE TREACHERY AT WORK.
I SHOULD TAKE YOU BACK TO HOLLY-WOOD WITH ME, LIU KANG.
YOU'RE STARTING TO SOUND LIKE...*hey*, WHO'S *THAT*?
FOOLS! I AM SEARCHING FOR MY COMPANION.
AND ANYONE WHO DETAINS ME MUST DEAL WITH...
HYDRO!
gaaauuukkk
FWOOSH
HEY, BUDDY. I DON'T KNOW WHAT *YOUR* BIG PROBLEM IS.
BUT *NOW*... NOW YOUR BIG PROBLEM IS *JOHNNY CAGE*.
FADUMP

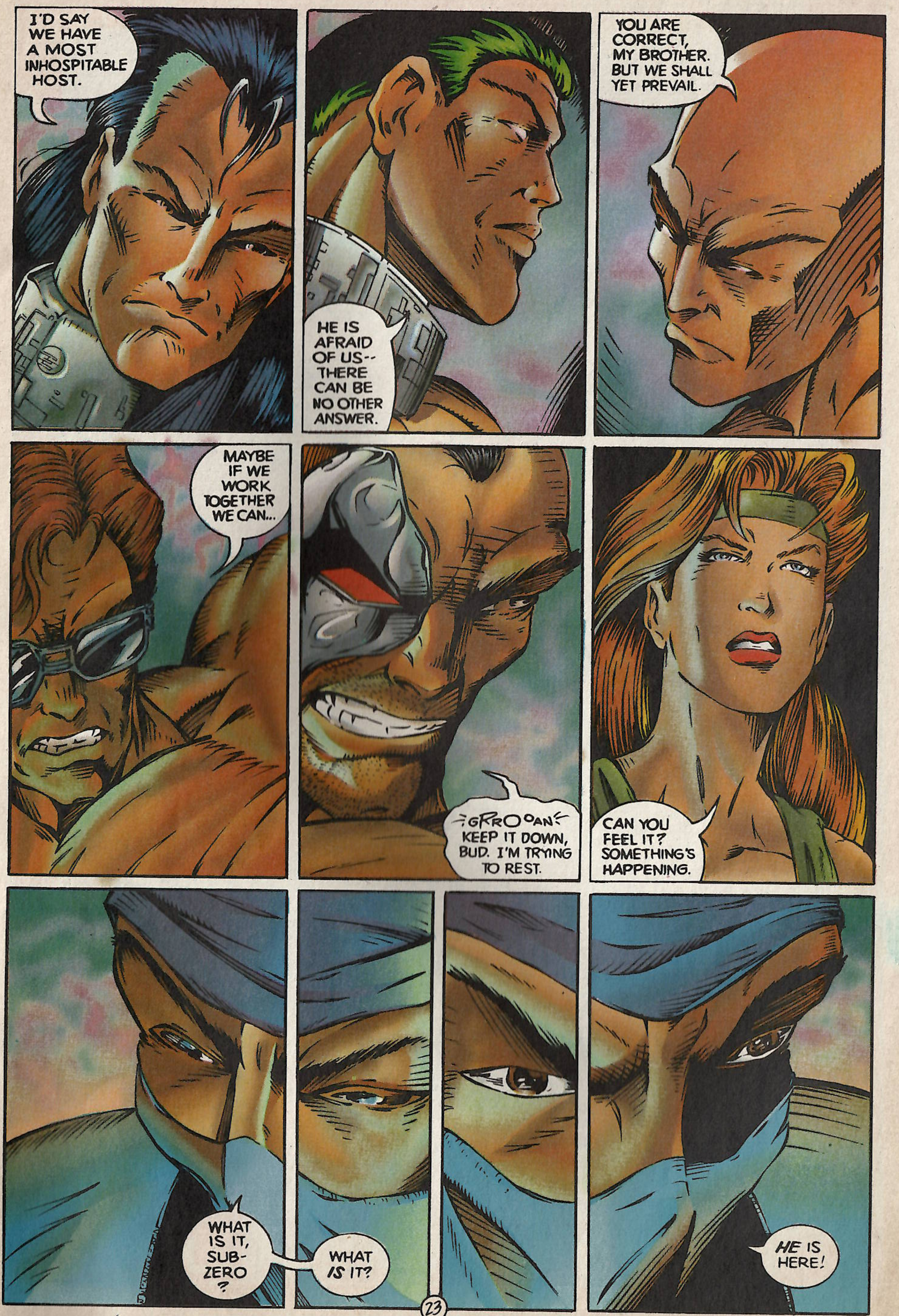

STOP! ALL OF YOU! STOP IN THE NAME OF SHANG TSUNG!
Uh oh. LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY CALLED THE COPS.
PERHAPS NOW WE'LL GET SOME ANSWERS CONCERNING OUR MISSING COMPANIONS.
Bah. WERE IT NOT FOR YOUR INTERFERENCE, I WOULD HAVE ESCAPED.
HOW ABOUT IT, LIU KANG? WE CAN PROBABLY TAKE THESE JOKERS.
WE COULD, MY FRIEND, BUT I SAY WE SHOULD NOT.
AFTER ALL, WE ARE THE GUESTS OF SHANG TSUNG.
EVEN THOUGH WE ARE NOT BEING TREATED AS SUCH.

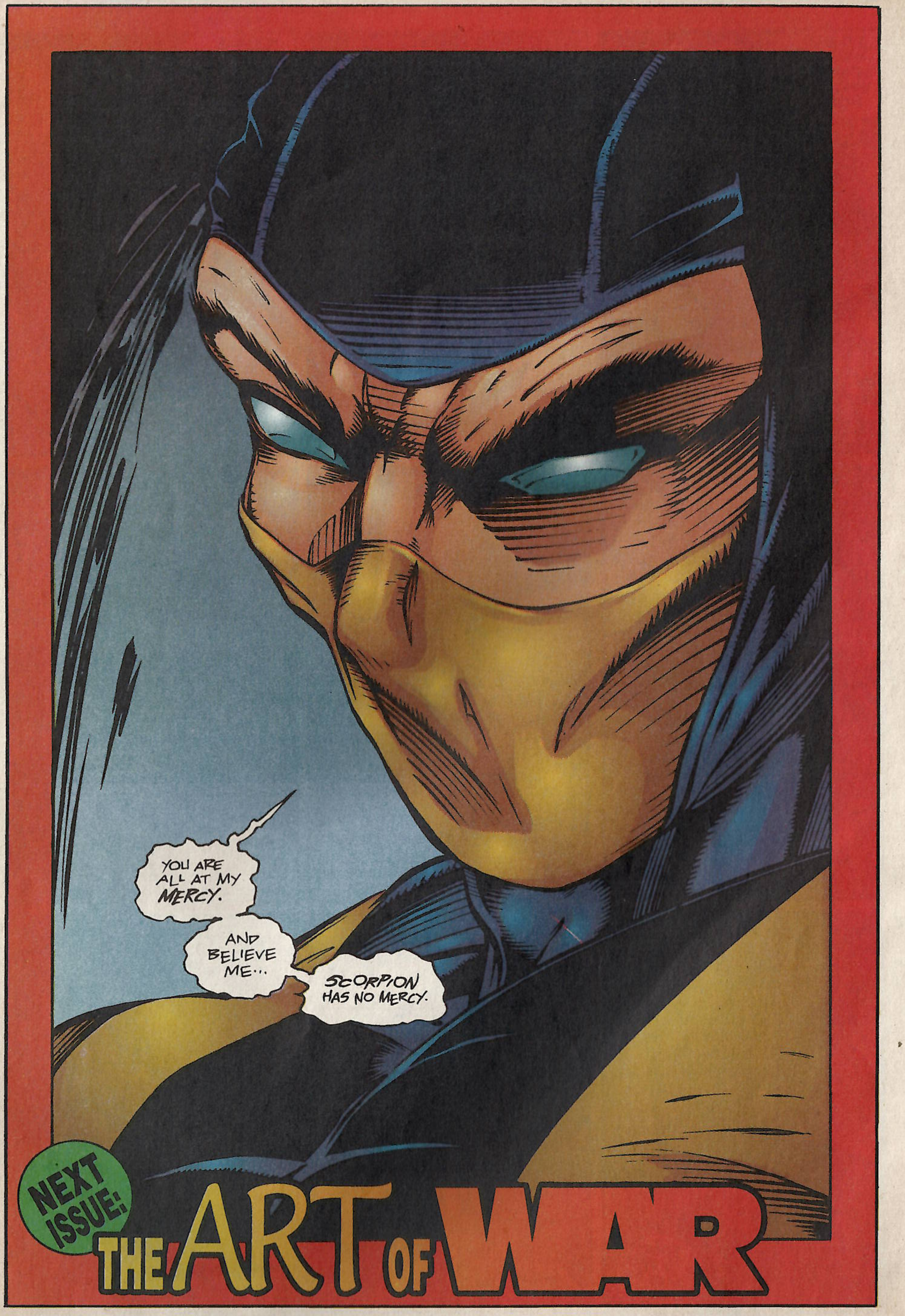

NEARBY, KANO HAS REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.
HEARD RUMORS THAT TSUNG'S PALACE WAS FILLED WITH RARE TREASURES.
I'M SURE NOBODY WOULD MIND IF I LIFTED A FEW.
BETTER PLAY IT COOL. I HEAR A VOICE JUST AHEAD.
FINALLY... I'VE MANAGED TO OPEN THE TAO TE ZHAN.
NOW ALL THAT STANDS BETWEEN ME AND THE MOST AWESOME POWER IMAGINABLE...
...IS SEVEN ANSWERS TO SEVEN RIDDLES.
I MUST FIND GORO. THE TOURNAMENT MUST BE TEMPORARILY HALTED...
...SO THAT I MAY CONCENTRATE ON MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS.
Hmmm. IF ANYONE IS GOING TO BECOME THE MOST POWERFUL WARRIOR ON EARTH...
KRUNNK
...IT SHOULD DEFINITELY BE KANO.


THAT WAS ALMOST *TOO* EASY.
NOW I JUST NEED TO FIND A SAFE PLACE TO EXAMINE MY PRIZE.
SOME-WHERE *AWAY* FROM TSLING'S PESKY GUARDS.
RUMMUMUM
MAYBE I'LL HIDE OUT DOWN HERE WITH ALL THE MACHINERY.
MUST BE *SOME* BIG GENERATOR TO MAKE SO MUCH NOISE.
RUMMU
MMUMM
Uh oh...
RUMMUM-UNH!


*WHO* DISTURBS THE REST OF *GORO?*
I WAS HAVING THE MOST *DELIGHTFUL* DREAM...
...THAT I WAS *SNAPPING* SOME POOR FOOL'S SPINE.
IT WAS ONLY A *DREAM,* MONSTER.
FWAP
AYE, BUT *SOMETIMES* DREAMS CAN COME TRUE.
...hummph...
BOOMM
YAARRGGHH
FORTUNATELY FOR YOU, WORM, GORO'S SHARP EARS HEAR HIS MASTER'S VOICE CALLING.
I'LL HAVE TO STRING YOU UP AND *FINISH* MY BUSINESS WITH YOU LATER.


A SHORT TIME LATER...
GORO! I HAVE SEARCHED EVERY-WHERE FOR YOU!
I HAD BUSINESS ELSEWHERE, MASTER.
WHAT IS IT YOU HAVE THERE?
I HAVE FINALLY OPENED THE TAO TE ZHÀN, GORO.
I LEFT IT IN THIS BOX, AND NOW IT HAS BEEN SPIRITED AWAY.
WHO-EVER DID THIS DEED SHALL BE GRAVELY PUNISHED.
I WANT THAT BOOK BACK, GORO.
BY WHAT-EVER MEANS NECESSARY.
CONSIDER IT ALREADY BACK IN YOUR HANDS, MASTER TSUNG.
GORO SHALL NOT FAIL YOU.


I'D SAY WE HAVE A MOST INHOSPITABLE HOST.
HE IS AFRAID OF US-- THERE CAN BE NO OTHER ANSWER.
YOU ARE CORRECT, MY BROTHER. BUT WE SHALL YET PREVAIL.
MAYBE IF WE WORK TOGETHER WE CAN...
GRROOAN
KEEP IT DOWN, BUD. I'M TRYING TO REST.
CAN YOU FEEL IT? SOMETHING'S HAPPENING.
WHAT IS IT, SUB-ZERO?
WHAT IS IT?
HE IS HERE!


YOU ARE ALL AT MY MERCY.
AND BELIEVE ME...
SCORPION HAS NO MERCY.
NEXT ISSUE:
THE ART OF WAR

**ISSUE 3 ON SALE OCTOBER 31 AT ALL GOOD NEWSAGENTS**

# MK 3 Unleashed!!

## WIN

**copies of the latest kickin' version of Mortal Kombat for the *Sega Mega Drive* and the *Super Nintendo***

**Mortal Kombats I and II broke all records when they were released on home entertainment systems back in 1993 and 1994 respectively. And they said lightning never strikes twice! The question now is whether it can strike a third time, as MK 3 launches on the SNES and Sega Mega Drive formats from *Acclaim* in October. And from a sneak peek at the game, it looks like MK fans ain't seen nothing yet!**

The game will have 14 selectable fighters, including 8 new characters, 2 new bosses and a fighter hidden within the game. And at 32 megs, it's the biggest MK game to date, with awesome graphics and more fatalities, animalities and babalities than ever before.

The seeds of the scenario are set many years ago, when the evil Shao Kahn rose to power in the Outworld, usurping the realm from Kitana's parents, and taking Queen Sindel as his bride. Sindel met an unexpected early death, but now, centuries later, she is reborn. And since Shang Tsung failed to win the Earth Realm through Mortal Kombat I and II, her rebirth is the means by which Kahn will finally seize the planet.

This evil act gives Shao Khan the power to step through the dimensional gates and reclaim his Queen, thus enabling him to finally seize the Earth Realm. Upon breaching the portal into Earth, Shao Khan slowly transforms the planet into part of the Outworld. He strips Earth of all human life, claiming every soul as his own. But there are souls which Khan cannot take — those that belong to the Warriors chosen to represent Earth in a new Mortal Kombat.

Other new characters include Stryker, the sole survivor of a North American city which was decimated by Shao Khan; Motaro, the half man/half horse centaur; Nightwolf, an American Indian Shaman; Sektor and Cyrax, two deadly cybernetic ninjas; Sheeva, the personal protectress of Queen Sindel, and the mysterious character known only as Kabal.

Many of the regular favourites from the first two games will be back as well, including Liu Kang, Sonya Blade and Shang Tsung, now more powerful than ever.

As we said, the game will be in stores in October, but thanks to the generosity of Acclaim, ten lucky readers will be able to win a copy of the game (for either Sega Mega Drive or Super NES), if they can correctly answer the following questions:

① **Which actor plays Rayden God Of Thunder in MORTAL KOMBAT The Movie?**
- a) Christopher Lambert
- b) Christopher Walken
- c) Christopher Lee

② **What is the name of Shao Kahn's Queen in MK 3?**
- a) Barbel
- b) Sindel
- c) Kylie

③ **A Centaur is a cross between a man and which animal?**
- a) a bull
- b) a cat
- c) a horse

If you know the answers, then ring the **MORTAL KOMBAT KOMPETITION HOTLINE** on **0891 600 234** before 24th October 1995, listen carefully to the instructions (making sure you only speak when instructed) and answer all the questions. Please state which format you would like if you win: Sega or Nintendo.

Ten winners will be chosen from those of you who answer correctly, and winners will be announced on the line on 25th October.

Maximum call cost is £1.96. Callers under 18 must have permission from parent or bill payer.

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*With thanks to Simon Smith-White at Acclaim*

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# KILLER KREATORS

## THE MAKING OF MORTAL KOMBAT II

By Mike Stokes

It has been said that when a pizza is good, it's very good, and when it's bad, it's still pretty good.

The same can be said for fighting games. There's nothing like going head to head against another character of similar ability and relying on your own wits and skills to come out of the fight a victor.

Even the earliest versions of video table tennis had a certain edge to them; just you and your paddle against the other player and his paddle, mano a mano, the winner was clear.

Now I'm not saying that table tennis and Mortal Kombat are the same thing–they may not even be on the same planet as far as comparisons go, but they're both pretty good.

So what separates a great pizza from a good pizza?

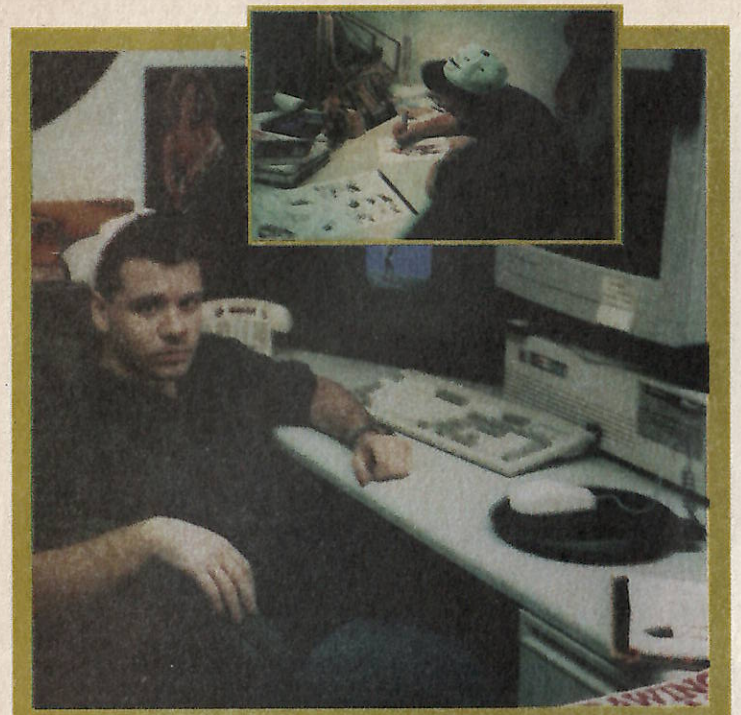
Both can have the same ingredients, cheese, pepperoni, sauce, olives–whatever, but its the way they're put together and the quality of those ingredients that separates a frozen, late-night snack from an aromatic, cheese-dripping feast that leaves you craving more and more.

So what's it all mean?

It means that Mortal Kombat II is one great pizza.

Substituting concepts, graphics and sound for cheese, pepperoni and sauce, the crew who put together Mortal Kombat II, John Tobias, Tony Goskie, John Vogel, Dan Forden and Ed Boon, used the top ingredients, prepared it to perfection and after the first taste, left everyone craving for more.

This article will serve as a recipe to show you how they did it.



"We'll do a sketch of the character, and that is usually used for the person who's constructing the costume as a reference." (Inset: Tobias at the drawing board sketching out an early Baraka.)

## Step One: The Concept

Finishing up two separate games [Total Carnage and Super High Impact Football, respectively], John Tobias and Ed Boon decided that it was a good time to use their skills and capabilities to add their company's name to the growing list of those producing the latest rage–fighting games.

"We saw the success of ... the fighting games, and we had both wanted to do a game with huge characters, so we started mocking up a game," recalls co-creator Ed Boon. "The original idea was to do a Van Damme licensed game, and we called them up and they said that he had already signed with another company, so we decided to do our own characters and the rest is history," he says.

Unfortunately for Van Damme, his fictional replacement, Johnny Cage, went on to become this Fall's top action star when the home version of Mortal Kombat II outgrossed not only *TimeCop*, but *True Lies*, *The Mask*, *Forrest Gump* and *The Lion King* in its opening week.

From there, discussions took place on the finer points of the game like the various moves and reactions to those punches and kicks.

"After that, we did some conceptual stuff on the plot, the storyline and what the characters looked like," explains co-creator John Tobias. "We'll do a sketch of the character, a color sketch, and that is usually used for the person who's constructing the costume as a reference."

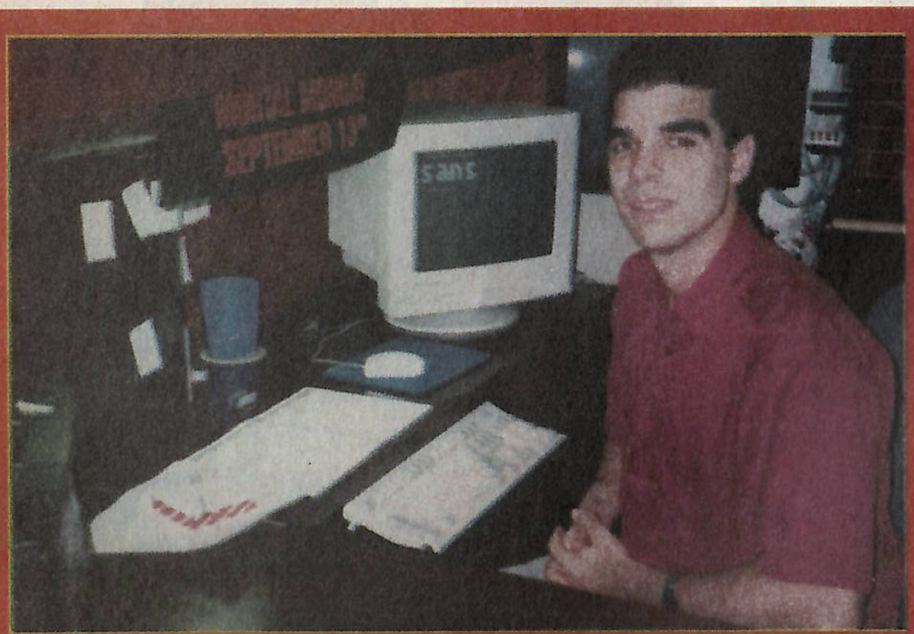
## Step Two: The Players

As they were coming up with the characters, Boon and Tobias already had people in mind to for the parts.

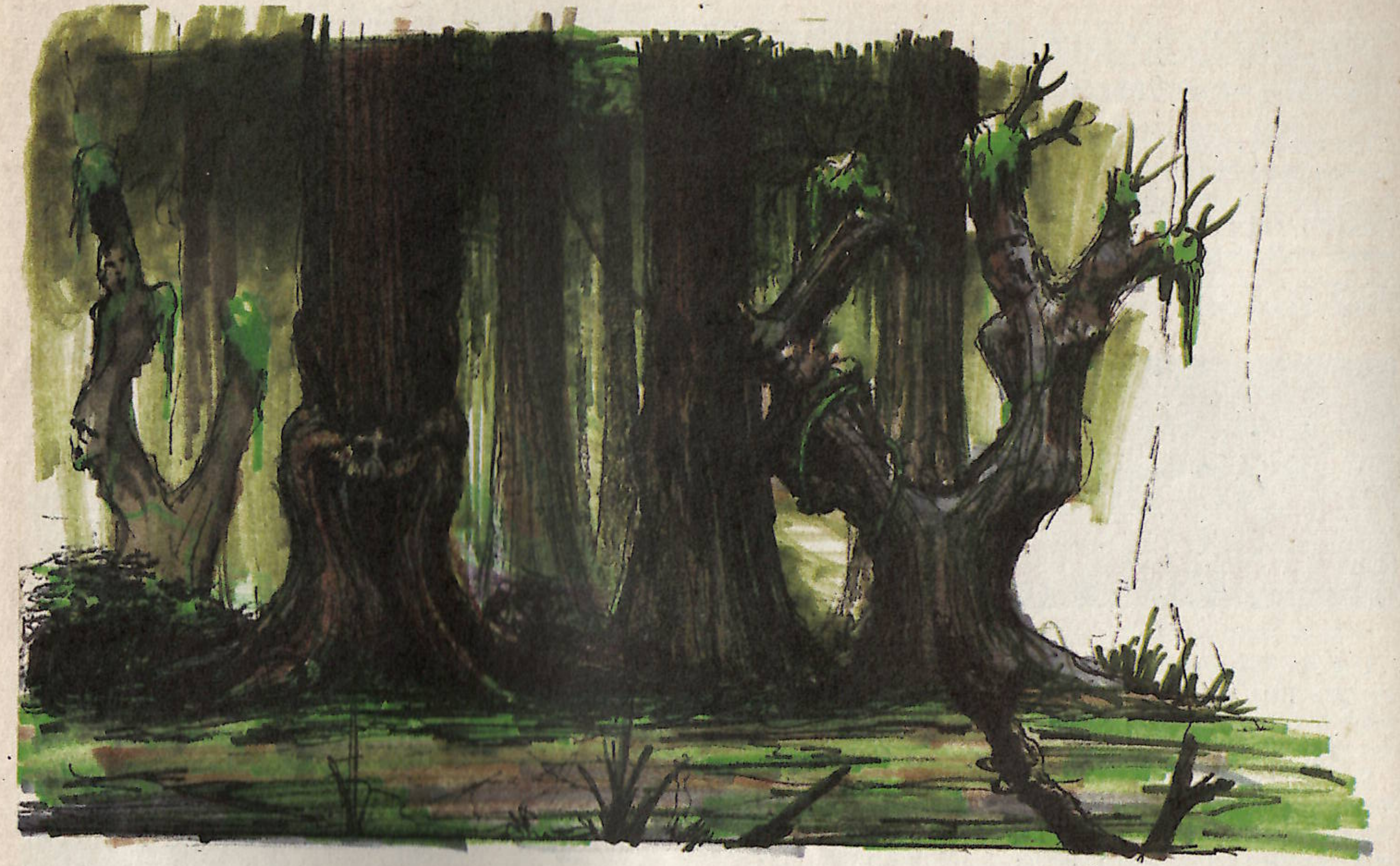
"John would draw the face to resemble an Asian guy or a dude that's bald," says Boon, "and then we'd get the guy in and take measurements, and the costume person would make the costume based on the sketch." After being outfitted for their costumes, the actors would then come to a studio to be filmed acting out their moves in front of a blue screen like those used to film special effects in movies.

To be filmed, the actors would stand with their sides to the camera and throw punches and kicks as they appear on the game screen, except they were not fighting anyone and several of the actors played more than one character.

"At that point, we've pretty much got a basic play mechanic going, so we know what kind of basic moves we want to do," explains Boon.



Ed Boon, the other half of the Mortal Kombat creation team, sits at his base of operations at the Midway offices. "We saw the success of ... the fighting games, and we had both wanted to do a game with huge characters, so we started mocking up a game."



## Step Three: The Setting

When the moves have been decided and the characters are being filmed, John Vogel, who was mostly responsible for Mortal Kombat backgrounds, and Tony Goskie who was mainly responsible for Mortal Kombat II backgrounds step in to give Liu Kang, Sub-Zero, Jax and the rest of the crew a place to duke it out by designing the game's setting.

The backdrops of Mortal Kombat and Mortal Kombat II are very subtle parts of the game that enhance the total package, helping to make the determination between great and pretty good.

For Mortal Kombat I, John Vogel set out to capture the mystical Outworld on video tape, based mostly on pencil sketches by Tobias.

"I just filled in the blanks and made it come to life," says Vogel.

Startlingly, Vogel revealed that many of the places in the Outworld are actually taken from places considerably less exotic ranging from the city of Chicago to his neighbour's front yard.

"I went to China Town in Chicago for the very first background with a video camera and just grabbed some images," he says.

"If you go there, there's a green-roofed pagoda that became the roof for the monk area. Basically, all it really entailed was to run around trying to find textures and just objects in general. I even went into some stores, grabbed some artifacts and digitized them while I was there and they actually ended up being in the games," he confesses, "the big Buddha actually was just a little lawn ornament in one of my neighbors' front yard."

Mortal Kombat II's Living Forest was also taken from a local park near the Midway offices, and while the trees in Chicago rarely scream, Tony Goskie taped an Ed Boon scream to morph into the picture.

Obviously, the lack of graffiti and candy bar wrappers in the Outworld is a dead giveaway that the videotaped footage used in the game was manipulated to a certain degree.

"I would digitize a reference, but I would

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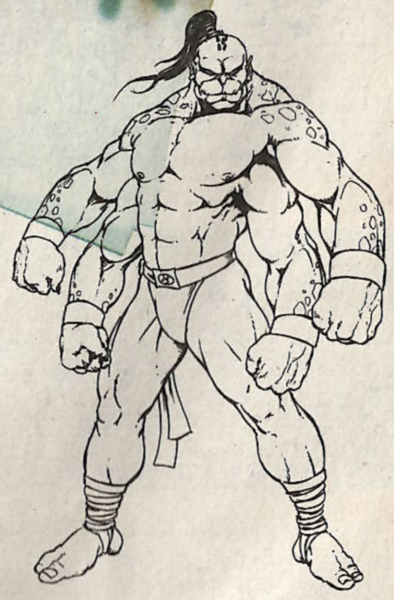
Background artist Tony Goskie adds colour to a sketch of the screaming forest. Ed Boon's scream was video taped and morphed to use in the trees.

draw on top of that," explains Vogel. "I'd mix my own hand-drawn stuff with the digitized stuff ... and colour them in the computer. "

The finished product actually broke down to 50 percent hand drawn settings and 50 percent digitized footage–and working background to foreground, it's a project that took approximately two weeks per background to complete.

"It's a slow process," Goskie says.



## Step Four: The Tunes

Like the backgrounds, the music of Mortal Kombat is uncontrollable, but a major factor in the game's overall feel and success.

Dan Forden is the man responsible for the game's soundtrack, and working mainly out of the studio in his home, looks at the backgrounds to get the feel for what style of music should be used.

"For the first two [Mortal Kombat games], there's sort of an oriental touch to it, although it has some other more modern effects, but the idea was to try to move away from typical video game music and try to make it look and feel more like a film because of the quality of the artwork and the digitized characters," Forden explains.

"I thought they really made it a lot closer to an interactive fight-movie than just a video game," he continues, "so I tried to make the sound heavier and a little bit more intense than you might normally see in a regular video game."

Forden is also responsible for the sound effects like punches being thrown and explosions. The team also collaborated on the narrator voice.

"The character speech was basically just from people around here that we coerced into various stages of frenzy," Forden chuckles.

The audio aspect changed between Mortal Kombat and Mortal Kombat II with new technology and a new soundboard.

"When Dan wrote the music for part one, he wrote it using a Yamaha synthesizer chip and that was very archaic compared to now," Boon says. "He has a whole studio where he can use real instruments.

"For instance, in part two there's a tune that had this flute going, and Dan actually played the flute on that and recorded it ... it's a complete full orchestration for part two and the same thing for part three. He has all these instruments going and just digitizes it."

In addition to the flute section, Forden plays guitar and bass in various sections of the game.

"The rest was done with MIDI instruments," Forden says, "[It's] sort of a semi-pro music studio with computers and synthesizers and tape decks and stuff, more of a traditional approach to writing and producing music like you have in a regular studio.

"Dan works at home, and he composes stuff and he'll come in a few days later and plays it for us and it's always something cool so we'd say, 'Oh, that's awesome,' and then we'd put it in the game," Boon praises.

John Vogel, another ace background artist shows off the Goro and Kintaro models used in the games.

Will the real God of Thunder please stand up? Carlos Pesina poses next to his Outworldly image as Rayden. Pesina was the actor who portrayed Rayden in Mortal Kombat II.

## Step Five: The Hallway Test

"As we move along," Boon explains, "we're all kind of walking into each other's offices and checking stuff out and giving commentary."

With all the images submitted by the Mortal Kombat team, Boon puts them into the game as fast as possible to determine what works and what doesn't.

"Then we start dealing with game play issues, and at that point we're playing the game and trying to get comments from everybody.

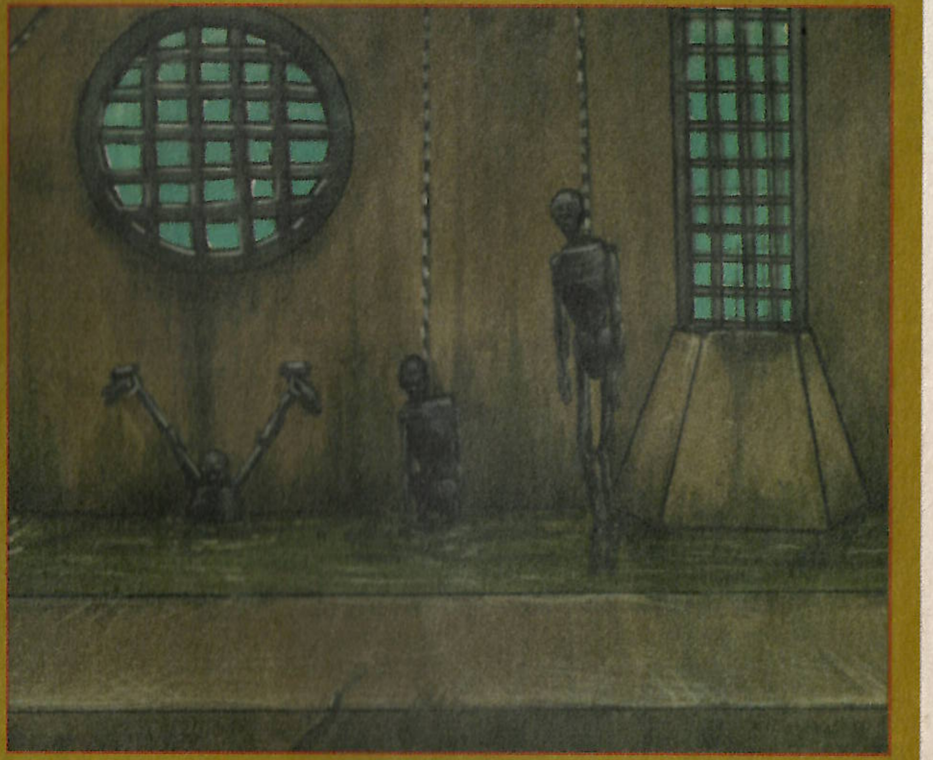
"We keep doing that process again and again for several months," Boon continues, "and then at some point we're ready to put the game out in the hallway when we feel comfortable with it, and the people in the factory and the other engineers play it and they give us their commentary. A couple weeks after that we put it on test locally."

After the first local test of Mortal Kombat, the lines of kids waiting to play the game let them know that they had a hit on their hands.

"We put it on test with six characters and everybody liked it, so we decided to add another one–Sonya," Boon adds, "and as we add new stuff, we decide whether we need another background or another tune or another what-have-you, fatalities and stuff like that, modifying it as we go along."

**The Mortal Kombat team has prepared their product to perfection, and with Mortal Kombat II setting records and Mortal Kombat III on the horizon, they have their customers craving more and more.**

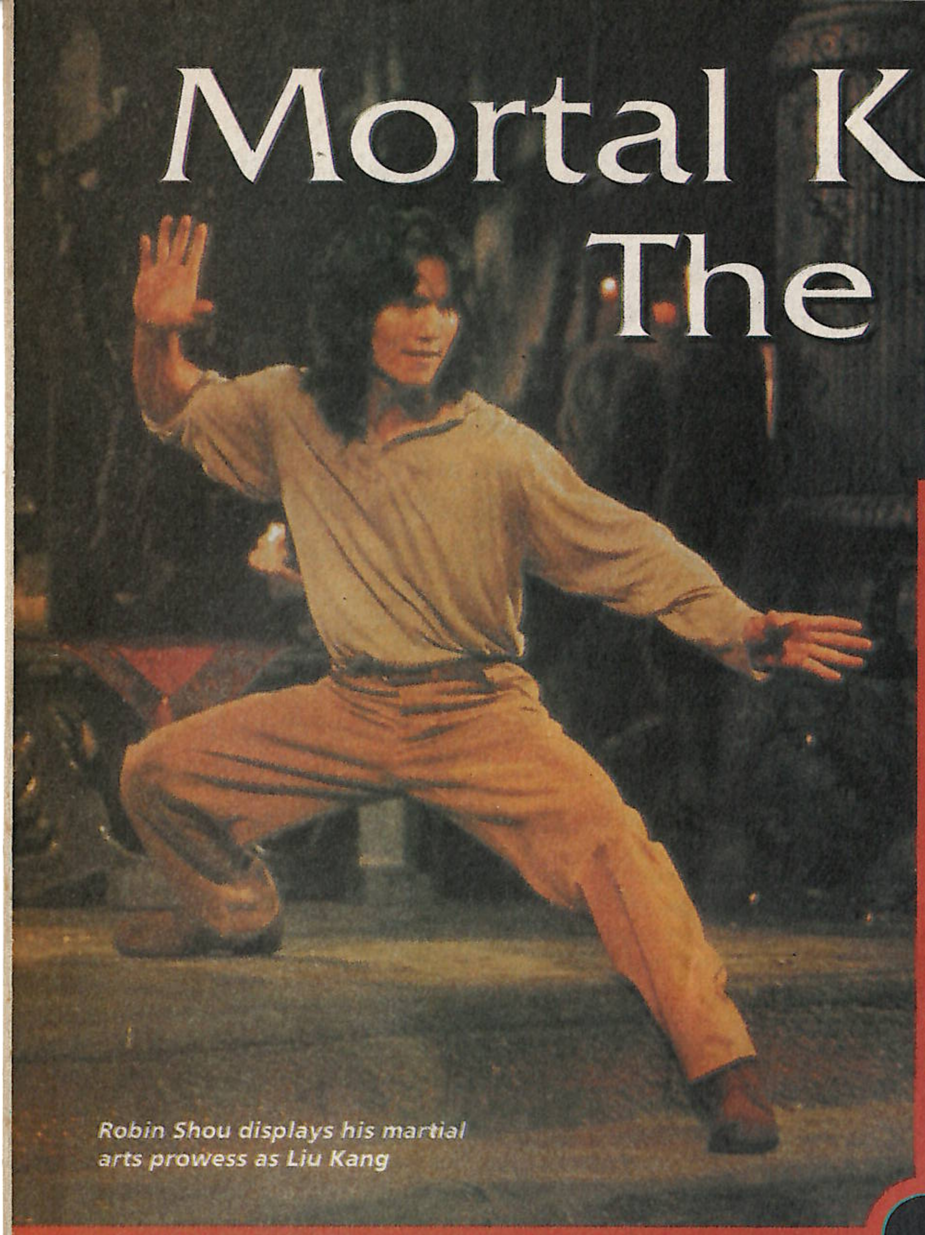
**From concept to cabinet design, Mortal Kombat took 8-10 months to produce, while Mortal Kombat II took a little longer–10-12 months before it was ready to serve, but then again it had more ingredients, proving my point; Mortal Kombat is like pizza. When it's good, it's great, and it's a lot less fattening.**



This preliminary sketch of the acid pool shows one of the worst places to end up in the Outworld. As the skeletons can attest, there's not much to do after an acid bath besides hang around. John Tobias sketches most of the scenery before passing it on to the Mortal Kombat crew for the finishing touches.

# Mortal Kombat The Movie!

## Special Sneak Preview



Robin Shou displays his martial arts prowess as Liu Kang

**From the very moment the first game was released, fans of Mortal Kombat knew this was far more than just another computer game. It has to date spawned three versions of the game for both arcades and home consoles, a set of action figures, this very comic book, the soon-to-be-released animated videos, and now its very own Hollywood movie.**

Its combination of exotic locations in Thailand, spectacular sets built in a massive Los Angeles warehouse and state-of-the-art computerized special effects (there are over 200 separate effects shots) mean that the movie is a visual feast. But does it pay off in terms of what the fans really want — hard-hitting and convincing action?

In charge of the battle scenes was the legendary fight arranger, Pat Johnson, who has worked with such superstars as Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan. But did he have the right raw material with the cast of MK to produce equally spectacular sequences? Fortunately, Johnson says he did: "Actors who complete this kind of film have to be in better shape than a world champion boxer, but in some ways their task is even more difficult. When a boxer fights for a title, he has to fight for about an hour, tops. But Robin (*Liu Kang*) Shou's fight in the Black Tower, for instance, took three days of shooting, 12 hours a day."

In fact, all the actors performed their own stunts, so there are no annoying "cut-aways" to stunt doubles as you would find in many action movies. The fights here are 100% authentic — and the difference shows.

The cast is a truly international affair — French actor Christopher (**Highlander**) Lambert plays the god of thunder, ***Rayden***, bringing a considerable screen presence and wicked sense of humour to the role. American cast members include Linden Ashby as ***Johnny Cage*** and ***Bridgette Wilson*** as Sonya Blade, while Robin Shou emigrated from the States to Hong Kong to find fame in that city's movie business. British actor Trevor Goddard plays the villainous ***Kano***.

The task of pulling all these disparate elements together into an exciting movie fell to the young director Paul Anderson, who also hails from the UK. After studying for a film degree at Warwick University, he made a number of acclaimed films including ***Shopping*** and a documentary on the comics artist Al Davison. He is also known as a writer for the TV series ***El Cid***.

So what, for him, was the attraction of the movie? "***Mortal Kombat*** reminds me of all the movies I loved as a kid," he says. "As a director, it gave me the opportunity to tell one of those larger-than-life stories where mere mortals do battle with supernatural beings. But I get to do it with state-of-the-art special effects and a nineties edge."

But, as always, the real test of any film is the reaction of its audience when it is finally released. So will ***Mortal Kombat*** live up to the high expectations of fans of the game? If its American release is anything to go by, the answer is a resounding Yes. The film premiered in Hollywood back in August, and went straight to Number One in the US Box Office charts. Can it repeat the same success here? We'll soon know, as Scottish audiences get a chance to see it from October 13th, while it opens in the rest of the UK on October 20th.

As if we needed to tell you — Be There!

Talisa Soto as Kitana - Beautiful but deadly

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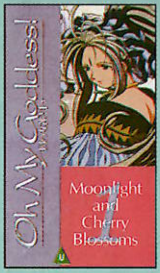
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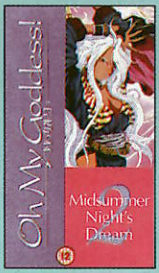
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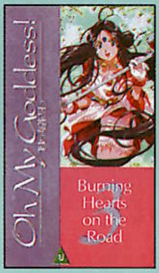
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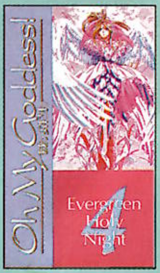
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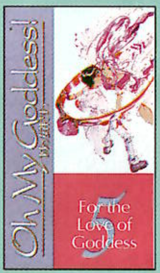
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